

# G NEW AGE GAMING G

S O U T H A F R I C A

**SOUTH AFRICA'S OWN PC AND PLAYSTATION GAMING MAGAZINE**

**TOMB  
RAIDER III**  
ADVENTURE BY LARA CROFT

**Lara's Back  
Packing Heat**

**Baldur's Gate**

**AD&D Re-Invented  
First South African Review**

**Return of the Sequels**

**Railroad Tycoon 2**

**Quest for Glory 5**

**Heretic 2**

**Populous 3**

**Crash Bandicoot 3**

**Colony Wars 2**

**& Much Much More**



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SID MEIER'S  
**ALPHA  
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# ED's Note

## A New Hope...

The application for this job went a little something like this. They asked me if I could play games, I told them of course, everyone can. They asked me if I could write, I told them I filled in the application didn't I? They asked me if I could spell, I told them I knew how to use a dictionary. They asked me what the word 'onomatopoeia' meant, I said I'd look it up - they hired me. You have to wonder what the application form might have looked like for the job of tomb raiding? The applicant must be prepared to leap to her death at least a hundred times while still maintaining a composed demeanour. The applicant will have to exhibit some skill in using many different types of weapons and be prepared to face tigers and enraged island inhabitants. The big question is always, how much are they planning to pay for all that leaping, big cat bagging and cliff wall climbing? Well, enough of this space-filling dialog and onto the real stuff.

A big welcome to the latest NAG issue in 1999. Fortunately in my new capacity as Editor I have an excellent template to work from and these certainly are a big set of shoes I'll be filling. Not to worry though I've got big nimble feet. With all the barbaric celebration each year-end it is traditional to make a few promises to yourself and then attempt to break them in record time. I'm speaking of New Year's resolutions. Everyone seems to be making the resolution not to make any resolutions, which is an easy cop-out but fair enough. These are mine, which I really hope I can stick to (I say this every year, but here goes).

1. To not waste this entire page by telling readers what they can find in the magazine, that job is for the cover and the contents. It does break with tradition somewhat but then I've never been a big fan of tradition anyway.
2. To finally give up my current obsession, which was turning into a life long wild goose chase, trying to find the real cheat codes for a nude Lara Croft. It has to stop now or my wife is going to launch me off the top of a very high cliff.
3. To stop referring to the Quake symbol as a religious icon and try to remember the teachings of peace and goodwill to all humankind. This is a tricky one and will surely be put to the test at our next LAN party.
4. To survive long enough in South Africa to see Star Wars Episode One. If you've seen the trailer in the cinema you'll know what I'm talking about.
5. And finally, to give our readers something to talk to their friends about. We're all on the brink of the turn of the millennium (arguments about the accuracy of this statement will be ignored) and we'd love to make the journey there better by continuing to give South African gamers what they want.

Enjoy the issue, it won't be the last.

**Michael James, Editor**

## A word On Warren, the real story.

It seems a little odd at this point in time after relinquishing my toilet brush to the new Ed. As things may have it I have slotted into my new found profession quite easily (hey, how hard can it be to flush the toilet) and am quite sure I have now proved myself to be king of the trash pile. Jokes aside, after sulking for more than three weeks due to the loss of the Editor's title, I have eventually realised that I've scaled up the food chain and now possess the enviable title of Editor-in-Chief. This seemed a little foreign at first but with such a great magazine and NAG's fantastic people backing you up, you can only be proud of it's heritage.

I would like to welcome Michael to the full time NAG team and congratulate him on a tremendous issue, a job well done under the circumstances. To all our readers, I would like to thank you for your overwhelming support during 1998, without which we would have found those late nights to be extremely lonely.

I will be popping my head into this section every now and then to give you feedback on the gaming industry and myself. With the solid team of the NAG staff and writers we promise to improve and grow with the ever demanding South African Market.

With that I will bid you all a pleasant journey through the world of NAG and get back to my never-ending quest to finish Baldur's Gate (hheeyyyyyyaaaaa).

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Riva TNT  
Power  
From Diamond



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# The Web

## NAG's WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

### ELECTRONIC ARTS AFRICA

Well all have complained about local distributor's websites lacking quality and content. As fate might have it Electronic Arts Africa have gone all the way and developed a thoroughly entertaining and informative sight filled with eye candy graphics and excellent features.

As would be expected EA Africa spared little expense in setting up one of the best South African websites to date. The sight utilises large doses of Macromedia Shockwave for its intensely entertaining website and all this without extending the surfer's modem to the limits. The site is situated on impressive bandwidth for quick and easy access to the page and is consistently updated. What makes this site even

more impressive is that the Oracle Web Designers that developed the site are all avid gamers and enjoy the fact that they are maintaining one of the busiest gaming sites in South Africa.

The site is jam-packed with information on all the products that EA Africa distribute and have links to all of the Electronic Arts websites as well as their affiliates.

There is a wonderful article on the beginning of Vision Software (EA purchased Vision in April 1996) and how two entrepreneurs grew a mountain out of a molehill. If you are looking for information on local developments then check out the local development link that will describe the talents that this country possesses (Celestial are currently developing 'The Tainted') and what current developments are on the go.

The site also carries a patches and upgrade section that seems a little empty at the moment, but that may be because EA don't normally have the need for patches in their product. For all the previous members of EA Africa's multimedia club, there is an updated section renamed 'The

Vault', that has added bonuses such as competitions and hints and tips if you become a member of this special club.

As things go in South Africa we have not been spoiled as much as our overseas counterparts, but now we are competing on the same level, if not better. If the other distributors can latch onto the same idea as EA Africa, we could join the ranks of the spoilt brat brigade.

A special thanks goes out from the NAG team and all the EA game supporters to Electronic Arts Africa and Oracle Web Developers for a site that oozes local info.

NAG

(PS: love those pics that fly around every now and then - truly funky!)

[www.ea.co.za](http://www.ea.co.za)

## NAG's Favourite Websites of the Month



The most talked about online game in history is debatably Origin's Ultima Online based on the hit sequel Ultima games. Now recently Ultima Online entered its second age with a totally revamped website to mark the milestone. If you are a seasoned surfer you would have certainly passed by the original UO site. If not then this is a site to visit if you are interested in Online Gaming at RPG level or just to find out about the trials and tribulations of the world of Britannia. This is a well developed and constructed site that has all the information needed to start adventuring in the cyber-space world (EA Africa distributes Ultima Online in SA and a copy can be requested at Tel: (011) 803-1212

The highly anticipated title of 1998 (1999 for us in SA) Baldur's Gate has caused plenty of disturbances over the last few months. The one site to stand proud throughout the battle of the unofficial is Baldur's Gate Chronicles. This site is dedicated to keeping the lovers of the game informed about the game and houses one of the most frequented message boards in the world. Since Baldur's Gate was released the message board has become extremely popular for hints and tips (no cheats), so if you are to get a copy (NAG Award of Excellence 93%) then this site is the place to visit. PS: This site houses one the the best AD&D database's currently available on the web.

If you are a lover of golf games then this site will enthrall you with information on the soon to be released Pro18 Golf from Psychosis. What makes this game a lot more interesting for the SA golf gamer is the fact that the game uses Sun City's infamous Lost City course as one of its internal course selection. There is also information on a different band of golfers (more European players and less US PGA golfers) and what the game features are. If you are at all interested in golfing on the PC then I recommend not only checking out this site but also buying the first game to support a South African golf course. Unfortunately no SA distributor is currently bringing in Psychosis, there's an idea.

An all round gaming site that has been around since the inception of the voodoo card. After starting as a site dedicated to updating information on the voodoo, it has progressed into a fully fledged gaming site that even the NAG team use to keep up to date with the industries information. The site has everything a gamer is looking for, from reviews to hardware profiles. It can be considered the most updated site on the web and has a large number of affiliate sites that will keep you browsing for hours. The seasoned surfer will recommend this site as one of the true gaming information sites with everything at their one stop shop.

This site is dedicated to the Sega Dreamcast as well as the past consoles and is packed with the latest information on games in development. The site is loaded with reviews and previews, as well as cheats and hints on most of the Sega game titles. There is also a comprehensive news section that is sure to keep you up to date with the happenings of the Sega Consoles. If you are still a proud owner of a Sega console or are planning to become a Dreamcast owner, then check out this site for all the information you need. We all remember being burnt by the sudden departure of the Saturn in the world market, so do yourself a favour and check out how hard SEGA are trying to make up.

# NAG COMPETITION

## Baldur's Gate

### 10 COPIES TO BE WON

Answer the following question to stand a chance to win one of the best RPG games ever.

**Question: how many screens does the Baldur's Gate world consist of?**

Send your answers to NAG Baldur's Gate Competition PO BOX 2749, Alberton, 1449 or E-Mail us at [comp@nag.co.za](mailto:comp@nag.co.za)



E-Mail:  
[topten@nag.co.za](mailto:topten@nag.co.za)

Postal:  
**TOPTEN**  
PO Box 2749  
Alberton, 1449.

## WORLD CHARTS

RC	NAME
1	Half-Life
2	Starcraft
3	Baldur's Gate
4	Night & Magic II
5	Fallout 2
6	Railroad Tycoon 2
7	Unreal
8	Total Annihilation
9	Thief - The Dark Project
10	Quake 2

PLAYSTATION	NAME
1	Metal Gear Solid
2	Gran Turismo
3	Tekken 3
4	Crash Bandicoot 3
5	Tomb Raider 3
6	Spyre - The Dragon
7	Final Fantasy 7
8	Small Soldiers
9	Resident Evil 2
10	Test Drive 5

# 10 TOP GAMES

## SOUTH AFRICAN CHARTS

LM = Position Last Month TM = Total Months on chart RET = Re-entry

RC	NAME	LM	TM
1	Starcraft - Great Wars	new	new
2	NIS Coastal Flight Sim	new	new
3	Quest for Glory 5	new	new
4	FIFA 98	new	new
5	Tomb Raider 3	new	new
6	Falcon 4	new	new
7	Caesar 3	8	1
8	Half-Life	new	new
9	Motor Racer 2	new	new
10	Age of Empires Pack	new	new

PLAYSTATION	NAME	LM	TM
1	FIFA 98	new	new
2	Tomb Raider 3	new	new
3	Tekken 3	3	2
4	Gran Turismo	new	new
5	Crash Bandicoot 3	new	new
6	Brian Lara Cricket	new	new
7	Small Soldiers	new	new
8	Formula 1 98	new	new
9	Spyre the Dragon	new	new
10	TOCA Platinum	new	new



## 3Dfx To Acquire STB Systems



It seems that 3Dfx Interactive will be entering the video card manufacturing sector of the market soon. The company has announced that it has entered an agreement to acquire STB Systems, a manufacturer and distributor of multimedia products. In a stock-for-stock purchase transaction, STB shareholders will receive 0.65 shares of 3Dfx common stock for each share of STB common stock. The transaction is valued at approximately \$141 million US dollars. The deal is expected to close in

March subject to various conditions, regulatory approval and approval by the shareholders of 3Dfx and STB. 3Dfx Interactive's aim is to provide PC-CLM and retail customers with a single source for 3Dfx branded add-in boards, allowing for a more tightly integrated chip, software and board level layout while driving a more controlled and focused brand investment.

## NBC Uses Fleet Command



NBC Special Reports in the US recently used Jane's Fleet Command, a naval strategy game from Jane's Combat Simulations, to illustrate the US attack on Iraq. The Jane's Combat Simulations team worked closely with NBC to prepare several hours of footage from Jane's F-15 and the upcoming Jane's Fleet

Command. It was impossible to know exactly where and how the strike would take place so the team used the computer simulations to recreate likely scenarios. Fleet Command's detailed maps of the Middle East and intricate 3D models of ships and missiles made it possible for NBC to recreate the conflict. For instance, Jane's F-15 was used to provide a simulation of today's most advanced fighter jets in action.

NBC producers have indicated that they intend to use other Jane's product to illustrate breaking news stories in the future as well. To find out more about Jane's upcoming Fleet Command see the short NAG preview on page 77.

## Microsoft Purchases FASA



Creative Labs will introduce a RIVA In yet another 'this company buys that company' announcement, Microsoft announced that it will acquire FASA Interactive Technologies from a group of

shareholders that include FASA Corporation. FASA is best known for the creation of the popular 'BattleTech' series of stories, characters and games. Microsoft will gain the electronic rights to the 'BattleTech' games, including the MechWarrior series. The purchase will however not affect the release of MechWarrior 3 by Hasbro Interactive and Microprose under a previous agreement. This purchase adds to the top talent in the Microsoft stable. FASA Interactive's developers will be integrated into development teams in Redmond, where they will continue work on upcoming titles, including a fourth game in the MechWarrior series. Microsoft is also exploring opportunities for other FASA video game properties, including the 'Shadowrun', 'Earthdawn' and 'Renegade Legion' universes.

## Myth II Recalled Due To Bug



A small number of gamers weren't happy when they found the uninstall bug in Bungie's new title - Myth II. Apparently if the game was installed into any other directory besides the default one, a bug in

the uninstall routine would erase your entire hard drive upon uninstalling the game. This problem is evident in the first demo released of Myth II and anyone who downloaded the demo should be aware of the problem. Bungie is advising users to rather drag the Myth II folder and its entire contents to the recycle bin rather than uninstalling it. The problem should only affect a small number of gamers but Bungie considered it serious enough to recall Myth II. The recall was badly timed and stores that had already received the game were notified of the problem and requested to pull it from shelves.

For this reason the Myth II demo was left out on this month's Cover CD (can you imagine the fan mail), but rest assured that we will publish the fixed Myth II demo on next month's CD.

## New Age Gaming - Price Comparison

	Incredible Connection	CNA Interactive	Business Land	Shop 99	Dtons	Pick & Pay	Toys R Us	Reggies
FIFA 99 (PC)	R279.00	R269.00	R279.00	None	R279.00	R259.00	None	None
Populous 3 (PC)	R299.00	R299.00	R299.00	None	None	None	None	None
Tomb Raider 3 (PC)	R349.00	R349.00	R355.00	None	None	R339.00	None	None
Half-Life (PC)	R299.00	R299.00	R299.00	None	None	R299.00	None	None
European Air War (PC)	R329.00	R329.00	R325.00	None	None	None	None	None
Crash Bandicoot 3 (PSX)	R399.00	R419.00	None	None	R409.00	None	R419.99	R420.00
Colony Wars (PSX)	None	R479.00	None	None	None	None	R469.00	R469.00
Cool Boarders 3 (PSX)	R349.00	R359.00	R349.00	None	None	None	R369.99	R369.99
Brian Lara Crickey (PSX)	R459.00	R479.00	R459.00	None	R459.00	None	R469.99	R469.99
Knockout Kings 99 (PSX)	R329.00	R329.00	R329.00	None	None	None	R420.00	R420.99

## X-Com 6 Designers Looking for Consumer Input



The developers of X-Com 6 are looking for input from gamers regarding ideas that they might have to improve the game. X-Com 6 is not due for release until next year and is currently in the early development stages. The most appropriate period for the developer's to implement user's ideas. "Obviously, we won't use every idea submitted, but we want fan input during the formative phase of the project before any code is written."

- Dave Ellis

Ellis did reveal these specifics:

- The game will be a squad-based strategy combat game in the vein of the first two titles.
- It will be set in the time period between Interceptor and Apocalypse.
- It will more clearly defined and deepen the story line and setting of the universe.

Ellis also mentioned the team has a tentative plot in mind. One specific issue the team hopes to address is the pure turn-based versus real-time argument and would like to know what fans have to say about the issue. To find out more information and participate in the ongoing discussion on features you can visit the X-Com site at <http://www.microprose.com>

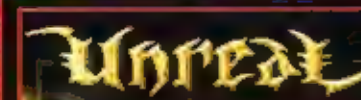
## First Commercial PlayStation Emulator

## PSX EMULATOR?

After many debates about commercial PlayStation Emulators in 1998 a little unknown company, Connectix, released the first commercially available PlayStation Emulator. The biggest surprise about this announcement was that it is a Macintosh based emulator. It is specifically designed for use on G3 powered Macintosh systems including Apple's hot new iMac. The emulator supports an astoundingly large list of both older and current PlayStation games, including Crash Bandicoot 3, Warped, Metal Gear Solid, Gran Turismo, Final Fantasy VII and Tenchu. Apparently there is a small drop in frame rate if compared to the PlayStation console, but it does boast full 2D/3D support, sound support, as well as flawless full motion video support. Connectix have stressed that the emulation was achieved entirely through perfectly legal reverse engineering and from what has been reported the emulator does not make use of the PlayStation BIOS.

The emulator does however bring a problem to light; it does not have any region protection or lockout and could potentially run pirated PlayStation games. Just as the industry has begun campaigns against piracy a product like this is announced commercially. If Connectix is allowed to market such a product on the Mac, which is arguably a small market it would be almost impossible to stop them marketing a similar PC product. So what does Sony Computer Entertainment have to say about all this? For the moment it's a stern no comment.

## GT Interactive Confirms Unreal for The PlayStation



GT Interactive has confirmed that development of a Unreal port to the PlayStation is taking place. Apparently it will be possible to make the processor intensive Unreal run on a PlayStation, just how much compromise has to be made to get playable FPS on the console remains to be seen.

Aardvark will be doing the conversion but unfortunately there is no official release date yet. Seems that Epic and Id Software don't give each other an inch of breathing space, even on the consoles. With Quake II for the PSX coming in March and Unreal probably soon afterwards 1999 is kicking off with bang on the PSX.

## Feb/Mar International Release List

PC Releases	PC Releases
Braveheart	EIDOS INTERACTIVE
Half-Life: Team Fortress	SIERRA
Links Extreme	ACCLAS
Machines	ACCLAS
Nordor 2	INTERPLAY
Sega Rally Championship 2	SEGA ENTERTAINMENT
Jagged Alliance 2	SIRTECH
Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri	ELECTRONIC ARTS
Apache Havoc	EMPIRE INTERACTIVE
Sin Mission Pack 1	ACTIVISION
Rayman 2	UBISOFT
Tonic Trouble	UBI SOFT
Redline	ACCOLADE
Road to Moscow	INTERACTIVE MAGIC
Total Annihilation: Kingdoms	CAVEDOG
Team Am Racing 68-72	GT INTERACTIVE
X-Wing Alliance	LUCASARTS
Civilization: Call to Power	ACTIVISION
Interstate 52	ACTIVISION
Ultima: Ascension	ORIGIN
Battlezone Mission Pack	ACTIVISION
Duel: The Mage Wars	VIRGIN INTERACTIVE
Darkwatch	EIDOS INTERACTIVE
FXI	TERMINAL REALITY
Heroes of Might and Magic III	3DO
R.C. Stunt Copier	SHINY ENTERTAINMENT
Requiem: Wrath of the Fallen	3DO
Sierra Sports: Baseball Pro '99	SIERRA SPORTS
Star Trek: Birth of the Federation	MICROPROSE
Menah	SHINY
EverQuest	SONY INTERACTIVE
Unreal level pack	GT INTERACTIVE
Lands of Lore III	WESTWOOD STUDIOS
Indiana Jones	LUCASARTS
Dorian	PSYGNOSIS
Mullari	INTERACTIVE MAGIC
Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun	WESTWOOD
Monty Scholl	MIRAGE MEDIA
Professional SportsCar Racing	VIRGIN INTERACTIVE

PlayStation Releases	PlayStation Releases
Alien the Heartless	CRYSTAL DYNAMICS
Army Men 3D	3DO
But A Movie 99	ACCLAS
Civilization 2	ACTIVISION
Clock Tower: The Struggle Within	ASCII ENTERTAINMENT
Dead in the Water	ASCII ENTERTAINMENT
Hello Kitty's Cube Frenzy	NEWKIDCO
Immortal Soul	JALECO
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	CRYSTAL DYNAMICS
Monkey Hero	TAI TWO
Monster Seed	SUNSOFT
R Types	ASCII ENTERTAINMENT
WCW/NOW Thunder	THQ
Beavis & Butthead Do Hollywood	GT INTERACTIVE
Big Air	ACCOLADE
Freestyle Boardin' 99	CAPCOM
Hard Edge	SUNSOFT
Japan	KONAMI
K1 Reverige	JALECO
Marvel Superheroes Street Fighter	CAPCOM
NBA In The Zone 99	KONAMI
Omkron	EIDOS
Point Blank 2	NAMCO
Shao Lin	THQ
Silent Hill	KONAMI
Sports Car Supreme GT	ELECTRONIC ARTS
Warzone 2100	EIDOS

New Age Gaming takes no responsibility for the accuracy of this information. Any of the release dates may be changed if the developer deems it necessary. The only official shipping date that most developers give these days is "When it's done!"



## Intel Pentium III Processor Coming



Various sources have reported that the Pentium III, Intel's next generation chip, is going to make its debut soon. Intel Corporation recently made an announcement and introduced the new chip but didn't give

any specific details on the processor: rumour has it that the Pentium III will launch at 450MHz and 500MHz. There is currently no word on how much the chip will cost either, although the prices will drop several times before the chips make their appearance sometime March.

In addition to having more speed, the Pentium III will introduce 70 new instructions with its Kaitai New Instructions, which will help accelerate 3D graphics, audio, video, and perhaps even voice recognition. This is good news for game developers who have been pushing the power of the Pentium II to its full potential. We can expect the developers to announce games that support the new instructions soon after the Pentium III becomes available.

Guess it's time that I start budgeting for a Pentium III but asking the editor to upgrade my home PC would be pushing it a bit.

## Quake 3 Test In March



In exciting news from the MacWorld Expo, where John Carmack demonstrated Quake 3, rumours have it that a test version of Quake 3 will be released in March. Although Todd Hollenshead from id Software stated that it would be released as soon as it is ready, be it sooner or later. Apparently John Carmack believes that it will be March.

The developers have not yet decided on what features and content will be included in the technology test and stated that it will not be as robust as a demo

or shareware product. "I'm sure it will be enough to slow the Internet for a couple of days as everyone rushes to download it." - Todd Hollenshead. Rest assured that we will keep all Quake fans updated on any news regarding the release of the test version and will join the queues of prospective downloaders on the day. Definitely something for the Cover CD as well.

## Westwood Studios Reveals Swords & Sorcery

Westwood Studios recently announced Swords & Sorcery: Come Devils, Come Darkness, an epic new role playing adventure. Based on the classic traditional elements of an RPG game Swords & Sorcery will feature statistics, spell casting and character classes. Players will be able to control parties of up to six characters, choose from ten different races - including Elves, Dwarves, a feline race and an elephantine race. Character classes will range from Warriors to Monks with a total of 15 classes planned.

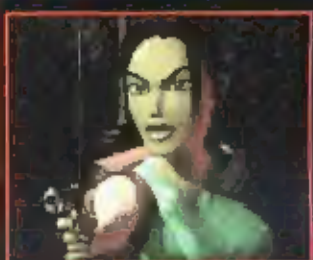
Swords & Sorcery will feature both third and first-person perspective views to play from as well as the ability to see the world from any party member's point of view. This gives the player more choices when engaging in combat or solving puzzles. Characters will also have the ability to be grouped together to multi-task on separate objectives simultaneously, in separate locations.

The biggest news about Swords & Sorcery is found in on the Multiplayer side of things. For the first time in an RPG, characters have full continuity between single and multiplayer games. This allows them to be transferred between the two modes of play with all statistics, abilities and inventory intact. Definitely something that has been lacking from RPGs in the past.

Swords & Sorcery is set to take place in the world of Gael-Serran and will span three distinct environments, each consisting of four regions. The land is under threat from an evil High Priest, Cet Ude D'ua Khan, who is planning to rise up and conquer all following his awakening from an entombed sleep. Saving the world requires the recovery of the 'Staff of Death', however players must first recover the legendary blessed and cursed Marlin Sword to achieve this. With quest such as these and many sub-plots and sub-quest Swords & Sorcery promises to be an epic adventure into the alien world of Gael-Serran.

Swords & Sorcery is due for release mid 1999 if everything goes as planned.

## Lara Croft Ambassador?



Britain's Minister for Science, Lord Sainsbury, delivered a speech at the Social Market Foundation on "Science and the Knowledge Economy" 30th November 1998.

He referred to improving the image of British science abroad in his speech. As an example of modern scientific excellence, he referred to Lara Croft and the Tomb Raider series.

"We need to build up knowledge among trading partners of contemporary British high-tech achievements. The Millennium Products activity is useful here in showing that the UK is still at the cutting edge of design and technology. We need to show that Britain is home both of Crick and Hawking, and of Dyson, Oxford Instruments, Rolls Royce, Roslin, Glaxo-Wellcome and many thousands of other world beating high-tech scientific and engineering enterprises. For instance, how many players of computer games around the world know that British developed games account for 30 percent of global sales, account for 75 percent of European sales, and employ over 27,000 people in the UK? So I want recognised examples of our technological innovation and excellence, such as Lara Croft of Eidos' Tomb Raider games or the McLaren racing car to become ambassadors for British Scientific Excellence. We must get the message across that we are still a force to be reckoned with."

Makes you wonder which other computer personalities might become ambassadors.

## Radio Control Car Racer Announced

At last you will be able to take radio-controlled cars where they were never meant to go. Acclaim has announced Re-Volt, a radio controlled car racer that will be released for the PC and PlayStation platforms this year.

The game will contain a bizarre assortment of tracks ranging from supermarkets to tracks that require you to leap from rooftop to rooftop in a quest to finish first. There will be more than 27 speedy cars that are impossible to fracture and with which you can use any tactics necessary to secure first place.

Multiplayer and state-of-the-art graphics combined with intense gameplay physics are promised to deliver a racer like no other according to Acclaim.

Racing a radio controlled car in places your parents never wanted you to should make for some interesting gameplay and deliver enjoyment to all radio controlled car fans everywhere.

I hope you have enjoyed THIS edition of Bits & Bytes. We hope to hear your opinions and suggestions about how to improve this section. If you have any comments please E-Mail me at [bits@mag.co.za](mailto:bits@mag.co.za) Leonard Clemond - Assistant Editor



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# BACKCHAT

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letters@nag.co.za

Thank you to everybody who wrote in. Unfortunately we cannot reply to all of them, but we do read them all. We have an e-mail address dedicated to the letters section. The address is listed above. If you write the e-mail you are almost guaranteed a reply. Congratulations to **James Francis** who wins a copy of Half-Life. Keep those gaming related questions coming. See Ya.

Please include your name and postal address with your letter so we can forward your prize should you win. Any winners without the above shall forfeit the prize and the Editor's cupboard will collect another game. The prize cannot be changed for cash or any other product. The Editor's decision is final and that's that.

Boy I can't wait - one good reason to take those calming pills. But what does this mean for the Gaming Industry? Big games big money? 90% of all games will probably have the title including 2000, 2100, millennium, etc. I could keep talking about it for

received more than enough exposure in the media to last another five millennia and as far as the gaming industry is concerned we've got something special planned, closer to the time if you know what we mean...  
Ed

Dear NAG

The late nineties have really been the time for the FPS genre. Since Doom we've been bombarded with a host of 3D shooters ranging from classics like Heretic to the so-so repetitive Tomb Raider. But it seems that over ambition, not a lack of creativity is going to knock the lot to their knees. Recently unofficial schematics of the Quake 3 engine have appeared on the web, which definitely boasts more than software rendering could wave a torchpick at. And John Carmack himself plans to let Arena take advantage of the latest 3D card available with its release. Which is pretty odd, since more power-hungry games are NOT what the gaming community wants. Why else would Quake still be one of the most popular Internet games around? Easy enough - everyone can run it. Sure, weapons and speed has a lot to do with it, but I'll bet Half-Life and Sin will do the same, because they both run fine on low-end machines, none of which seems to count when it comes to Unreal and the like. Hands up who last had a real Unreal tournament? Most of us don't enjoy violent slide shows that much.

It seems that games are walking straight into the holes Intel dig to keep its monopoly (which means spilling out new 'better' performing processors like a melon-eating baboon), and we're bound to fall in as well. The question is, are gamers going to react against this, or is lag going to find a breeding spot on our very own PC's? Maybe I am better off on a PlayStation....

Regards

James Francis  
Newcastle

You bring up an interesting point here, one that has somehow managed to evade any limelight until recently. The 'bigger-better-faster-more' philosophy that hardware developers have embraced is a double-edged sword. The

To NAG

Are the games that are being sold at flea markets originals? I spoke to a vendor at a flea market who was selling games like Half-Life and Starcraft for R100-R150. The guy insists that the disks are originals but are imported from the Czech Republic and sold below normal prices because the packaging is not complete. The discs are printed the same as the originals but you only get a small booklet in the CD cover. If these are originals, are they being brought into the country legally? Do the distribution agents in South Africa get anything for this or is this just another scam to skip the distributors? There are also several people who cut disks at home and then advertise them in the classified publications, are these guys ever followed up on as the newspaper is becoming a favourite place for these guys to sell pirate software.

Thanks

Jason Burdett A.K.A. Mad Adventurer  
e-mail

I sincerely hope this isn't an attempt to justify your purchase of one of these 'legal' titles! This should answer your questions. No, they are definitely not legal and anyone who tells you they are is just trying to cover up his/her own illegal operation. If these pirate copies are being brought into the country by any other method other than through the correct distribution channels then it's been done illegally. No, the distributors don't get anything from these dealings. In the past a number of legal loopholes have prevented the big distributors from prosecuting these criminals but that is about to change, soon. New Age Gaming is against piracy in any form, it's robbing our industry and hiking up prices. Just remember the biggest criminal in software piracy is the person buying the illegal games.  
Ed

main problem is one of competition - if any single developer stopped pursuing technological improvements then they'd be left behind, still trying to sell tiny monochrome monitors in an age where high-resolution 17-inch monitors are fast becoming a minimum requirement. Equally companies like Intel who release a new chip almost every six months are praised for progressing the human race so quickly but chastised for making this evolution so expensive. A tough debate on any level. This problem should resolve itself anyway as more and more consumers start saying no and game developers start feeling the pinch.  
Ed

To NAG

Eleven months from now it's gonna be the big two triple zero.

Jans de Jager  
Grahamstown

The Y2K issue in our view has

To NAG

First of all I'd like to compliment you guys on a brilliant magazine. Secondly everyone wants a Voodoo or the new Riva TNT, unfortunately not all of us can afford it. Like me for instance. Anyway have no fear there is a really cheap 3D accelerator which kicks butt! Yes it surely does. I'm talking about the Intel740 2xAGP screen card. It really performs well. I have an Intel Celeron 266 64MB ram and of course this screen card. I am running Quake2 640x480 at around 50fps not bad hey. And that's not all you must see its performance in Need for Speed 3 wow. So if you can't afford a 3DIX based card or the new Riva TNT then try this one out. I would actually like you guys to do a review on some entry level 3D accelerators and definitely include this one.

Thanks  
Your Biggest Fan

Momè Wahl  
e-mail

Thanks for sharing your success with the Intel card. Many gamers out there are becoming a little jaded when having to spend over a grand on a 3D card just to be able to get certain games running. We're always looking for new hardware to review and one of our considerations is always value for money.  
Ed

Hey Mr. Editor!

Your magazine redefines the word excellence. I was a subscriber to one of your leading competitors (hehe) and the difference between you guys is remarkable! Your cover CD kicks even the British CD's butt. It has all the best games to use with my new 3D card, which is a Creative Graphics Blaster Riva TNT. This brings me to my discussion point. I really love 1st person shooters and my interest in them was fading due to my inability to run

them. I decided to start looking for a 3D card. I turned to the ever faithful Internet and found tons of info. I decided in the end to get a TNT instead of the outdated Voodoo2.

I started looking for prices at www.shopper.com which was really useful. I then compared them to the prices in good old S.A. and was shocked. I eventually bought my TNT from an online shop called Cyberian Outpost (www.outpost.com). I worked out eventually that I saved R800 by buying it overseas. I also received it in an amazing 3 days via DHL couriers at no charge because of a special offer that Cyberian Outpost was running. I paid exactly R1000 (this is not a joke), that's with customs included! The RRP in S.A. is R1799! My point? We are being ripped off badly! Solution? Boycott the South African market until the suppliers bring down the prices to a price that is well within the reach of all gamers. Why should we be ripped off?

Simon Carolin A.K.A. The Doc  
Port Elizabeth

Fair enough comment and it is true, prices are a little inflated here in South Africa. There are a number of reasons for this but at the end of the day they don't really make much difference when handing over the hundred Rand notes. One thing to remember though, who are you going to phone if your card stops working, we were also left with the same dilemma.  
Ed

To NAG

My reason for writing this letter is a concern over Piracy. Yes, every one is tired of that irritating word but it is a reality. I reckon that the problem with piracy is that it is so cheap, some of us cannot just fork out R400 for a game that could entertain us for a few weeks. On a pirate CD you get about 14 of the latest games on one CD. The only downfall is the are no movie scenes. So, the only way to get piracy out of everywhere is to lower the prices, but if the companies lower the prices they get no profit, if they don't then they still don't because of the piracy. So, no matter what the Distributors never win. When will this Piracy thing stop? How can the Distributor win the Piracy

Game?

Mark Tomzynski  
vanderbijlpark

Piracy is becoming a hot issue here in South Africa. Keep reading and watch out for our big Piracy issue coming soon.  
Ed

Dear NAG

First I want to say that I am amazed that a magazine could give you so much reading pleasure! With that I would like to congratulate you on a job well done not only with the magazine but also the cover disc. I wrote to ask you if you could shed some light over a few topics that I have queries about concerning the costs of PlayStation and Computer games. All right, I just forked out R400 for the latest Computer / PlayStation game. But the question keeps twirling in my mind: 'Am I being ripped off?' I mean where is all the money going? Certainly not all to the company who developed it. Well, if the developer doesn't receive all the money between whom else is it divided?

In that case if the developer only receives + R100 why can't gamers buy games directly from the developer for a cheaper price then the developer will be making a bigger profit and gamers can get games for cheaper prices! Gamers don't care so much about the nifty box and manual of a game that the quality of the game itself. Please, don't misunderstand me. I don't think that the quality of game isn't worth the money. But I just can't understand why we pay R400 for a CD, box and manual especially PlayStation games where you only get a CD (R15) and CD case (R5).

Henry Chapman  
Three Rivers

Thanks again everyone for all the praise, but enough is enough. If our heads get any bigger we'd have trouble getting through the door. In answer to your question: don't think that it's just a CD and case you're getting when you buy a new game. What you're paying for is the product of many months of work, the kind of work that requires dedication and commitment from a large team of people - who need to be paid for their work. Piracy also plays a big

role in the pricing of games, so when a friend of yours gives you an illegal copy of a game ask him to tell you why the games are priced the way they are.  
Ed

Dear NAG

Even though I am 50 something I do enjoy your magazine and was so thrilled to see your cover CD. However due to outdated technology I cannot play some of the games on it. I only have a VGA colour card and no chance of upgrading. Is it possible to release June's World War 2 fighter and some of the others on a CD that would be playable on older systems? Thanks for a great issue and looking forward to next year's issues.  
Best Wishes

Estelle Boy  
Florida

We'll see what we can do about putting older titles on the cover CD. Although nothing is planned for the near future it is a possibility. Most computer stores do carry budget games and these are not only cheap but ideally suited for your current setup.  
Ed

Dear NAG

It has been a long time since Street Fighter 2 hit the arcades. Shortly after, the fighting game craze swept the console industry. This popular genre can be credited with saving arcades as well as over-saturating and dominating the home platforms (but that's another topic). While it seems this category has more longevity than a redwood, its simple logic of competitions and diversity has sustained in all these years. However, what's surprising most of all is not the mere success and endurance of the fighting genre, but the real lack of peripheral support.

To its credit there have been numerous types of fighters including SF, MK, Tekken, Virtua Fighter and countless clones. Still, a lot of these games rely on the same aspect, namely control! The button configurations and functions may be different, but the controls must yield great response in order to generate the competitive feel of truly controlling your character. It doesn't matter if you're tapping or rolling

the controller. It simply must be responsive to make the battle tight. All of the above mentioned games may vary in their blocking method, special moves and game engine design, yet they all do an incredible job of synchronizing the software and game control to produce a smooth but tight 'feel'. It's this great playability that ties these different games together as a group, that being the king of the fighters.

Having drawn this very simple and seemingly logical conclusion, it seems strange that there aren't more peripherals to support these games. Being an avid fighting game fan and an arcade player, most controllers don't work as well as they could. The first problem is the strange or awkward button con. fig. of most controllers. Many are simply too small, too close or strangely arranged (N64 anybody?) Then there is the issue of ergonomics and controllers being too light, flimsy or uncomfortable to stand up to vigorous demands of fighting games. (How many people find their hands getting sore after several matches? Especially after playing Dead or Alive with the basic PSX control). In addition, there hasn't been any real support of first party joysticks or fighting controllers. My point is that for players of my ilk who are used to and demand the arcade-quality controls, there are a scarce number of controllers that even come close. Simply put, many home peripherals don't mimic the responsiveness, durability, comfort and most importantly, the performance of arcades (where most of these fighters are born). No matter what the new generation of systems and peripherals may come out with, I hope they cater to the popular genre in terms of its arcade origins and live up to the demands of comfort, performance and durability.

Basil Cox  
Pietermaritzburg

You certainly have put together a strong argument. In my opinion some of the newer controllers these days are a vast improvement over what we used to have and they play much better now too. If anyone else has anything they'd like to add to this please let us know.  
Ed

Thanks to all the writers of this months letters, keep the topical questions coming.

# BACKCHAT

PO Box 2749  
Alberton  
1449



Previously in Archives we looked at the big video game crash of 1984, and saw how crappy games, together with the arrival of the home computer brought the entire video industry to its knees overnight. So, Atari lived to fight another day and tried to make an impact on the ever-growing home computer market. Various other entrants had arrived, like Coleco (the guys that sold plastic pools for a living) who tried to steal the lime-light with the Coleco Adam. Then there was Dragon, BBC, The Accorn, Spectravideo and of course Tandy. It was all too evident that the age of home computers had arrived, with Spectrum and Commodore leading the way.

In Japan meanwhile, games giant Nintendo had made it known that they had developed the first 8-bit games console, called the Nintendo Entertainment System. Nintendo knew that if their system was going to make any impact on the home computer market they had to secure the best games in the industry. So how did they do it? Well when Atari hit the market their initial recipe for success was the fact that they already had a stronghold in the arcades. Whatever was a hit in the arcades they released for the home system. Well, why reinvent the wheel.

Nintendo followed Atari's trend and signed arcade giant Namco in a 10-year contract as exclusive 2nd party software developers. At the time Namco had the reputation for having the best arcade titles. Rally X, Pacman, Galaxian, Pole Position, Dig Dug... should I carry on. So the NES was released with all these juicy Namco titles. It became an instant hit around the world.

Although Namco produced most of the major titles for Nintendo, the NES allowed Nintendo to introduce what was to be one of the worlds best selling game commodities since Pacman.

Making his debut appearance in the Donkey Kong arcade games in 1983, Mario grabbed the attention of gamers both young and old. Mario land on the NES grabbed even those who never laid an eye on Donkey Kong. It appeared that rescuing princess Daisy, was something everyone wanted to do. And still today Mario is Nintendo's biggest selling title of all time.

It is however important to note that at this stage Atari was still making the 2600 VCS and selling it to the lower end of the computer game market. The interesting thing was that they were still selling about 9000 units per year.

But while Nintendo basked in the NES glory, Atari was plotting to reverse the tables on the opposition in the home computer race. But there was one small problem. They were on the verge of bankruptcy.

## Act 4 - The New Generation

Timeline - 1984 - 1986

**Will Granzier A.K.A AtariBaby delves into the intriguing challenges in the gaming industries past. Find out why Commodore was a raving gaming success.**

Why exactly, no one knows, but in August 1984 Jack Tramiel (Owner of Commodore) bought Atari from Warner for an estimated 10 million dollars.

All of a sudden Atari could give their plans flight. If you can't beat them, invent something better! Well that's what the newly inspired Atari designers did.

And now comes the very sensitive issue that has been debated since '85. As far as my research goes, in 1985 it was Atari who once again had a world first when they released the first 16-bit computer for home use. Some would say that it was the Amiga that came out first, but as pointed

could transfer a full 1.4 MEG per second! Just after Atari hit consumers with their ST, Commodore put their Amiga 500 out in the market place. Looking suspiciously like the Atari and using the same Motorola chip (the 68000) the price was very much on par with that of the Atari. At the time both machines were selling at round about R1500 - R2000. Commodore made it known that they wanted the Amiga branded as a machine on its own without linking it to its predecessors the C-64 and the VIC 20. Commodore would brand it as the Amiga rather than Commodore's Amiga. The reason? Commodore felt that although the

Commodore 64 could be used as a business machine, and many were, it had the image of a gaming computer and they didn't want the new Amiga to follow in its footsteps. The Amiga would be aimed at the business market with little focus on gaming!

In September 85 Trip Hawkins, then president of Electronic Arts was quoted as saying "the new 16 bit computers can revolutionise the home computer industry". Well he

was right... It could have, but it didn't. All because of one man - Jack Tramiel, you see in 1985 IBM saw that both Atari and Amiga were slowly gaining the leading edge in the computer business. At the time IBM's biggest and most affordable machine was the IBM PC or PC JR. If you wanted to get a machine that could match the Atari or the Amiga you'd have to spend about R9000.00 on an IBM AT with a monochrome or EGA display. It was clear that the PC was up for a hard time against these new kids on the block!

So why would the Atari and the Amiga fail, and how would IBM combat the growing threat they posed and what was happening in the console industry?

We will answer all of those burning questions and present another first from Atari in next months issue...until then, if you have an Atari ST in the attic, e-mail me I'd love to hear from you!

will@adnol.co.za

Meanwhile, let me boot up my Atari 1040 ST and teach that PC a thing or two!

AtariBaby



The captivating competition between the Atari ST and the Amiga 500 sparked off the start of the affordable gaming machine's legacy.

### BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW?

The Motorola 68000 chip used in both the Atari ST and the Amiga was the same as the one used in the new Apple Macintosh at the time, and marked the beginning of what is today called RISC technology!

out in an article published in the top US computer magazine 'COMPUTE!' in September 1985, Atari invented most of the technology used in the Amiga by Commodore. Marketed as the machine that offers 'Power without the

price...' The ST had features that most PC users only saw with the arrival of the 386 and later the 486, but more about that in coming issues.

The Atari ST was and still remains the benchmark in many fields of computer technology. Known to have one of the most versatile sound chips, many music studios today still use the Atari ST as a MIDI player and sampler. Even the graphics palette had an amazing 500 colours. Quite an achievement in itself seeing that the PC was only just getting out of monochrome and into CGA and EGA. Another feature that will leave any PC quivering in its tower case was the power of the Atari's disk drive. It

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# The Demo Scene

When it comes to code, real demo coders prefer to do it in real-time. Real musicians compose their own original pieces - either for general public release or to play during the demos they accompany. And real demo artists generate the most incredible pictures - by hand, if you've watched any demos, you've almost certainly noticed some cool pictures as part of the overall programme, sometimes with effects applied to them, other times just displayed for you to admire. In fact the art in demos can often make an average demo look better than it really is.

## Skin deep

Have you got what it takes to produce some stunning demo-style art? Well a few definitions and some explanations of scene conventions might be in order. Firstly, like any art, 'stunning' is in the eye of the beholder. That having been said though, demo scene art ranges anywhere from the photo-realistic to the superb caricature. If your demo group likes the pic, they'll probably include it.

Secondly, there are all sorts of arguments nowadays about what constitutes acceptable use of the tools that are available today. In the early days of the demo scene on the Amiga and the PC, there were only a few paintbrush-style programs that early artists could use. Thanks to more CPU horsepower and advances in software development, pretty much anyone can get their hands on cheap or free tools that produce professional results. This includes photo-retouching tools, 3D modellers and graphic design programs such as CorelDraw. In the heydays of the Future Crew, early versions of 3D Studio were subject to this kind of scrutiny. If you've seen Second Reality, you'll have noticed a couple of graphics that were rendered in 3D Studio. Future Crew got pretty defensive about this, putting in a long piece in their first (and only) diskmag about how 3D Studio is a Cool Tool to Use. That didn't stop them getting flamed for blatantly copying someone else's

**CODING  
GRAPHICS**  
**THE STATIC EYE  
CANDY OF DEMO'S**  
**PAUL FURBER PREACHES THE  
DEMO GOSPEL - PART 6**



picture - remember the woman sitting on top of the large bear? But more about subject choice just now.

So does owning these packages (don't be a thief and rip them off) make you an artist? No, say the top demo artists on the scene today. They point out that the very best artists can draw already - that is to say they're dab hands with a paper and pencil or some other conventional medium - which means their training in composition, balance, perspective and chiaroscuro (the Italian term for shading volume) stands them in good stead when they start using digital tools. The other side of the coin is that professional tools can make anyone capable of producing professional results. If you're short of an artist - and world-wide they're thin on the ground - then a professional tool will output something a lot better looking than a first effort with MS Paintbrush.

**Professional tools - professional prices**

So you don't have five grand for a copy of Photoshop and even CorelDraw is a little expensive. Don't

worry, you could always copy it and be a lamer. Or you could look at more reasonable drawing tools. I know some artists who swear by Paint Shop Pro as long as they have all the plug-ins that go with it. Check [www.hack.co.za](http://www.hack.co.za) for a good example of a Paint Shop-generated graphic on the front page. If you hanker after free software alternatives, then try [www.gimp.org](http://www.gimp.org). The Gnu Image Manipulation Program is an extremely powerful, if somewhat quirky, image-editing tool for just about any platform.

## To copy or not to copy?

A subject idea is a good first thing to have when embarking on any artistic endeavour. Stuck for one? Then you could model it on a classical painting (see the pic by Scener Lazur), a picture by a famous fantasy artist, or any other source you can think of. There are two schools of thought here: some say copying, albeit by hand, someone else's picture is bad form. Others see the act of reproducing it as faithfully as possible as the ultimate test of skill for the computer artist. But copying someone else's scene pic is a no-no. Just ask Marvel of the Future Crew. In case you don't know what I'm talking about read their pathetic excuse in the info file that came with Second Reality. You don't have Second Reality? Oh yeah, Horne1.org is going down soon. Get it from somewhere else.

Luckily the GFX Scene zone still thrives on. Check out <http://inf.mil.org/scenegfx/gfxzone.html> for all the resources, tips and examples that I can only hint at. Next time I'll be talking about design issues. Mail me on [maverick@is.co.za](mailto:maverick@is.co.za) with complaints, questions and general demo chat. Or you could subscribe to the SA Demo scene mailing list. Check out the revamped SA Demoscene home page at <http://www.overload.co.za/sascene> for details on joining.

**Maverick**

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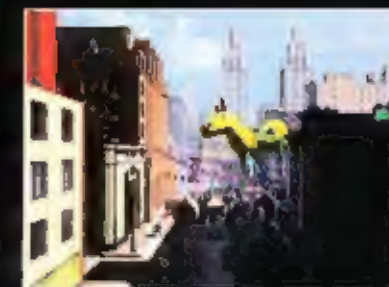
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"Leader, a new era of struggle and opportunity awaits you. The UN Starship Unity has arrived in the Alpha Centauri system after a 20-year voyage. All contact with Earth has been lost. After Captain Garland's assassination, the crew mutinied and split into seven factions, each seizing control of one of the Unity's colony pads. You now shape the destiny of your faction, which has just made Planetfall!"

**S**id Meier is probably as well known to the gaming fraternity as Steven Spielberg is to movie-goers. Sid Meier is, of course, the creator of the Civilization series which, although released more than three years ago, is still being played religiously today.

Well, if Steven Spielberg got away with it with Jurassic Park, then why shouldn't Sid Meier with Civilization? What am I talking about... a sequel, of course. Enter Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri, currently in beta release. One might say that Alpha Centauri is "Civilization set in space", however this would do the new game an injustice.

For those of you who have played Civilization 2, you will recall that one of the victory conditions is to be the first to successfully launch a space program. Well it is at this point that Alpha Centauri begins, with you making "planetfall" from your space craft and then trying to populate and make an economic success of your new environment using the given resources that are available to you from the land itself.

Many of the controls are the same as those in Civ 2, the interface is similar although with better graphics and with more emphasis on a 3D terrain. Graphics are pretty good but I found that the distinction between various vegetation types could have been made clearer and that certain units, such as the former, could have been made smaller as it tends to obscure the terrain and makes the land around a city

## Turn Based Strategy

**Developer:** Firaxis Software

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts

**Supplier:** EA Africa

**Tel:** (011) 803-1212

**RRP:** R299.00

**International Site:**  
[www.alphacentauri.com](http://www.alphacentauri.com)

# SID MEIER'S ALPHA CENTAURI

look extremely cluttered.

The gameplay is very similar to Civ 2 and involves picking a site for your city, and then developing the land around it. At the start of the game, you choose to play one of seven factions who have landed on the planet. The choice you make is quite important as each faction has specific skills and limitations, which can have a great bearing on how you approach the game and how you interact with the environment and the other factions.

Each faction has certain bonuses and disadvantages such as Gai's Stepdaughters, known as the "Greens", this faction is environmentally conscious, they start the game with technology and knowledge that helps them work with the resources the planet has to offer. The Greens can also capture Mind Worms, an indigenous life form and a pest that's pretty good at destroying your combat units early on in the game.

Other units include Human Hive (The Despoths). This faction is essentially a police state and while growth and industry benefit

from this control the economy does not because of limited political freedom. The faction University of Planet known as "The Scientists", care little for any thing other than research and information. They are vulnerable to espionage however.

At the beginning of the game, all factions start in a different locale, with a home city where you set out to colonise the world. Unlike Civ 2, SMAC includes "governors" to automate what you build



Management and strategy meet in a cascade of windows.

More options than you can drop a menu on.

## Alpha Centauri (cont)



Land and sea based management.

In a city. They can be asked to specialise in a variety of skills such as discovery, exploration, combat, building and can even build Special Projects. The governors are easy to manage but I did find that it detracted from the game play, so I never used them.



Colonising the planet is pretty Civ 2-like but you have a lot more options than you ever had in Civ2. The planet is a lot more complex than it was in Civ2. You can mine minerals, produce energy, and harvest nutrients and you will also have to contend with other exotic life forms including mindworms, locusts, and floating, independent islands that will attack you, depending on how much terraforming has been done to the planet.

The area around each city needs to be exploited to allow your city and faction to grow. Like Civ 2 you will be able to choose how the land is used and an on-line tutor will make suggestions according to the land type. High lying areas are good for solar collectors, you can build farms, plant forests, on land, or kelp forests in the ocean. You do have former units (engineers) that do all the terraforming. These can be automated in a number of ways, a feature I did make use of on occasion.

Once you have built up enough resources you can build another



Who wants the Super Droid when you can have the Super Dome?

colony pod which you can then send off to establish a new city. Each city can build various facilities such as hospitals, research labs, energy banks to name but a few. Cities also produce defense units. Here the choices are quite varied as they depend on what technological discoveries are made.

Unit design is very different to what it was in Civ 2 and involves building units out of the components that your research has discovered. So a successful research into laser technology will allow you to add laser weapons to all vehicles. Each time a component is used for the first time in a unit, the unit is considered a prototype, and will cost more to build. Trying to create units that use all of the latest technology costs a huge amount, so it's important to only design units with components that are logical and useful. This is a very flexible feature however and it will allow you to add armour to formers or even Colony Pods.

Combat is also similar to Civ 2, although you can now choose a defender in your stack of fighters. If you are beginning to lose, you can disengage fast units during combat. I found the AI to be quite aggressive and often had to start a war I would have preferred to delay. Even in the early part of the game, when there is plenty of



land to be found, one of the more irrational factions would land and start to attack or make unreasonable demands. Although war, early on in the game, is not always sensible you can often gain a tactical advantage if you capture a couple of important cities.

Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri is an excellent game and should keep you occupied in to the early hours. The only drawback I found was that where in Civ 2 technological development was quite logical as it has a cultural basis, i.e. if you discover the wheel you can build chariots, Alpha Centauri is set in the future and is largely Sid Meier's guess work. What does Advanced Subatomic Theory give you? Ask me in three hundred years and I might be able to tell you. Sure there is plenty of online help and an excellent "tour guide" to help you but it is still a little difficult the first couple of games. Other than that small gripe I must say that I am certainly looking forward to SMAC.

razor



# Preview Under Construction

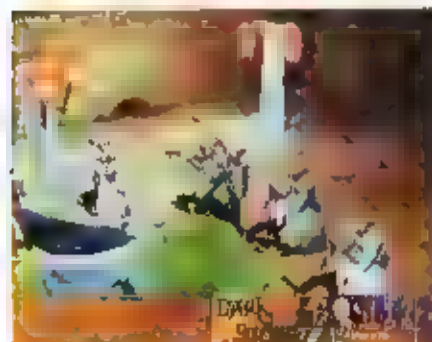


arkstone, formerly Dragon Blade, is a new RPG from those French game developers Delphine Software. Under their belt they already have some excellent titles with Jade Dragon being one of their most famous. This new game from

Role Playing Game

Delphine Software

## DARKSTONE



ing peace and goodwill to the land. The only way to defeat this repulsive annoyance is to find and collect seven magical seeds and by bringing them together, the magical seal can be summoned. You will need to use this magical seal in your final battle for peace.

In game RPG fashion you can play the game as a knight, thief, magician or priest, each with varying strengths and weak-

nesses. Playing in single player mode you will be able to control up to two dif-

ferent characters. The more evil minions you slaughter as the game proceeds the more your character's inherent abilities will increase, eventually allowing you to take on the meanness and toughness that the game throws at you.

The game boasts real-time lighting, full motion on the camera and a number of advanced special effects. You'll get to use 12 different items, 21 weapons and over 32 spells. There is an automatic quest generator and 86 types of enemy creatures will harass you over the game's rich, detailed maps.

Extensive multiplayer support is included with up to eight characters participating in the quest. Unlike Half-Life, you don't have to play along with your team mates. (I'm what we've seen from Delphine in the past, Darkstone can be classified as elegantly animated, it looks good and has all the right elements of a deep and absorbing RPG.

NAG

Naval Strategy Sim.

Jane's Combat Sims



as the title suggests is one of naval command. Deciding how and where you want your fleet positioned and what threat gets

attacked, yes, you will be able to choose from a different naval fleets from all the world's nations with access to over 150 of the most advanced vessels on the planet.

Early builds of the game certainly look promising and for those of you who have never experienced an at-sea battle before, there will be a number of training missions available to get to grips with the interface. Fleet Commander will appeal to any one who enjoys a more realistic strategy game with the emphasis on realism and accuracy.

NAG

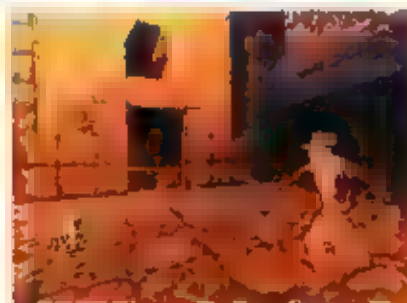
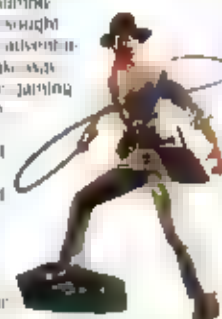


## INDIANA JONES and The Infernal Machine

Action Adventure

Developer: LucasArts

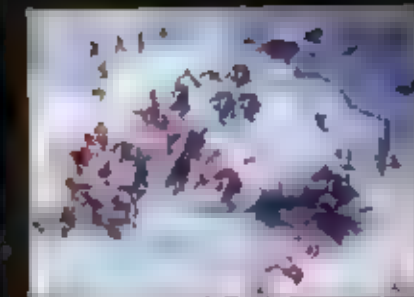
Indiana Jones has humbly stepped out of the spotlight as an archaeologist adventuring through time, making way for a new hero in the gaming world. This new action game from LucasArts looks set to change all that at least for a while. The first sequel to the cult classic is only just beginning and the Russian government has ordered its agents to search the ruins of the tower of



Barbar for an ancient machine. This machine, an unlock an inter-dimensional gate, and if a machine can unleash a deadly force, and saving the world, it's your turn to do it. At first, only one person can enter this evil place. Indiana Jones, Scout of the world, leads that will feature in the game include the ruins of ancient Babylon and the mysterious Aztec pyramids. Your main objective is to

NAG

# Myth II SOULBLIGHTER



It's just you and your men. They follow you into battle. And follow your orders. Whether you lead them to victory or their deaths depends solely on your decisions. Such are the perils of war in Myth II: Soulblighter. The strategy game that puts the strategy where it counts. On the battlefield. With its real world, 3D environment, ground positions become critical. Archers shoot farther from hills and bluffs, Dwarfmen grenades roll down hill. Trees block arrows. You either use the terrain to your advantage or suffer the consequences. And with Myth II: Soulblighter's rotating camera, you can watch all the combat unfold from every angle. Everything that made Myth: The Fallen Lords 1997's Game of the Year is here. With better game play, graphics and a whole new storyline with new units and new levels. Plus an editor that lets you make your own maps, modify units and even change the force of gravity. And of course there's bingie.net, the world's best free site for multi-player gaming. Fully redesigned and ready to host worldwide carnage. The question is are you ready for Myth II: Soulblighter?

BUNGIE







**H**eretic II is all about fantasy, magic and monsters which is a drastic, but welcome, departure from what we've grown accustomed to from the last crop of first person shooters. The story picks up where the first game Heretic left off. For those of you who never played the first game here is a rough idea of what has come before. The people of the world Parthors lived in peace and followed the teachings of the Seraphs until the demonic serpent rider D'sparil conquered the land. Soon, unable to resist the iron will of D'sparil, the races of Parthors chose to follow the laws and rule of the evil serpent rider and finally recognised him as ruler of their world. A young Sidhe, belonging to

Corvus found himself wandering the Outer Worlds instead of his hometown of Silverspring. In Heretic II the story continues with Corvus wandering the barren Outer Worlds for many years, unable to find a way home. By chance his Tomb of Power felt the presence of a nearby world Ripple opening and guided Corvus to it. Finally, after all this time Corvus prepared to return home. Now arriving back in his hometown of Silverspring things are not what they



should be. Life in Silverspring has changed, for the worse, there is a deadly plague that has infected the local inhabitants, turning them in blood-

everyone is familiar with it's interface and console. On the down side this old engine has been surpassed by far superior engines and just can't do some of the stunning effects that a game like this demands. So, it is with some surprise and wonderment that you begin inspecting your environment, gone is the first person perspective and hello to a Tomb Raider floating camera. Now some of you may be raising your eyebrows at the thought of this and you'd be well justified in doing so, with the poor examples of how not to implement a third person camera of the past. Worry not though because Heretic II seems to have perfected the use of this particular style of game with aplomb. The traditional elements of the standard Quake II user interface have been left alone so getting Corvus to jump, dodge and climb are relatively instinctive. Where the big difference comes in is using the mouse to look around. Corvus remains the centre of attention but the camera can be moved to look over a precipice or line up enemies. Never once are you left wondering where the lead character is and the only time things don't work out perfectly is

## HERETIC II

one of the five races on Parthors began to unlock the mysteries of the lost artefacts of the Seraphs. Using an ancient magic wand the young hero, Corvus, began fighting D'sparil's minions. His power was limited, but was enough to begin his quest. His defiance of D'sparil quickly earned him the label heretic. On his journeys to defeat D'sparil he discovered more magical weapons and even one of the famed Tomes of Power. Using these items Corvus managed to defeat D'sparil but did not escape a final damning curse. After stepping through a portal to return home,

The first person shooter genre is in serious need of a fresh coat of paint. It seems all these games are shoehorned into a rigid template that dictates they must all be futuristic, involve aliens of some or other kind and must be looked into a first person perspective. Raven, the developers have always managed to offer games that don't strictly follow this pattern and Heretic II is another classic example.

thirsty killers. The rest of the tale is told during the game via engine cut-scenes and some character interaction. It is an epic quest and the intriguing tale holds the interest right from the opening sequence. It really is a nice change of pace for a game of this kind to concentrate so much energy into the story line.

If you place Corvus in very small spaces or where he doesn't belong. Everything works so well together it really must be seen to be believed. Besides perfecting the camera and movement of the hero, other effects such as lighting have been put to good use when firing spells and hacking enemies to death. Many Heretic fans will feel instantly at home with all the weapons and every-



Stick 'em up. They're even hijacking computer game characters these days.

When making an engine get it right. Heretic II uses the Quake II engine, which might be a good or a bad thing. On the up side the Quake II engine runs fast and smooth on relatively lower end machines unlike the Unreal, and just about

### 3rd Person Shooter

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 166 or higher 32 MB RAM 4 X CDROM 2 MB SVGA Video Card 250 Mb Hard Drive Space 8MB Compatible Sound Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Pentium II 233 or higher 32 MB RAM 4 X CDROM 3B Accelerator card or 2 350 Mb Hard Drive Space 8MB Compatible Sound Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)
RAVEN Software	
Activision	
Multimedia Warehouse Tel: (011) 315-1000 R 299.00	
www.activision.com	

## Heretic 2 (cont)

thing feels distinctly like Heretic but with a major overhaul in the accelerated graphical department. The maps are elegant polished affairs and you'll be hard pressed to discern any remnants of the Quake II environment. Each location has an awe-inspiring feel to it and most gamers will be hard pressed to pass a harsh judgement on the design and quality of the levels. A number of natural enemies as well as the plague ridden populous inhabit the maps. These unnatural inhabitants come in the form of the Gorgon, a two legged predatory lizard, the flying Harpies and plenty of nasty rats. The plague-ridden townsfolk are dangerous enough and come after you with witch-forks, poisonous gas and magical spells. The game certainly provides ample challenge for your reflexes as well as putting on a very nice show to look at too.

A poison for your lesson  
There are two kinds of weapons in this game, defensive and offensive. Both prove extremely useful and you definitely won't find yourself using only the offensive weapons - some of the weapons use mana (an ethereal substance used for casting spells) and others use ammunition. We'll start by having a look at a few items from

the offensive arsenal first. Besides the usual fireball and primitive stick weapons, Heretic II has some of the most spectacular weapons to ever grace this genre. The Sphere of Annihilation is one such example and can be powered up, using more mana the longer you hold down the fire button, upon detonation the energy ball and subsequent shock wave destroys anything in close proximity to the impact point. If fire is your thing then the Firewall, when cast, unleashes a wall of flame that consumes anything in its path. Bear in mind that when the Tomb



What else poop poop would you need for a dragon?



tion to function, come in the form of the Hellstaff which makes a come back from the first game and fires a continuous stream of projectiles. There are two types of bow available - one fires Storm arrows that create a miniature storm at the point of impact anything caught in the storm will quickly perish. The other fires Phoenix arrows that explode in a conflagration of fire and shrapnel at the impact point. There are also shields that give



These claps, fireball jump Slapping the back out of me!

of Power is used in conjunction with any of these weapons that power is increased and different special effects are used. This powering up of weapons effectively doubles the number of weapons on offer. Weapons that do not require mana, but rather around

Corvus unique temporary powers. In recent computer game history the only other game that offered this kind of stunning weaponry effects was Forsaken. So, if you are of soft settings and military styled first person shooters then Heretic II has more than enough on offer. An amazing game that simply defies any real criticism other than the less than new game engine, relatively short game overall and longer than normal load times. It's different and unique and never fails to impress.

Heretic II offers more from a first person shooter. It looks different and will have you looking at the screen more often than not. For a unique experience give Heretic II a try, you won't be disappointed.

92 87 92 90 88 86

www.activision.com

Overall Rating: 89

Pros: Fast and Loud  
Graphics  
Moving Enemies

Cons: Short  
Long Load Times





Their canvas is a monitor screen. Their implements are keyboards and mice. Pixels are used instead of paint. Their inspiration, imagination and innovation is a seemingly bottomless well, a never ending flow of genius. They are the masters. They are Bullfrog. It's been a long wait for many gaming enthusiasts; the historic game that sparked many genres has finally achieved a new highly evolved form of entertainment. Surprisingly with so much to live up to, *Populous: The Beginning* doesn't disappoint. — RedTide

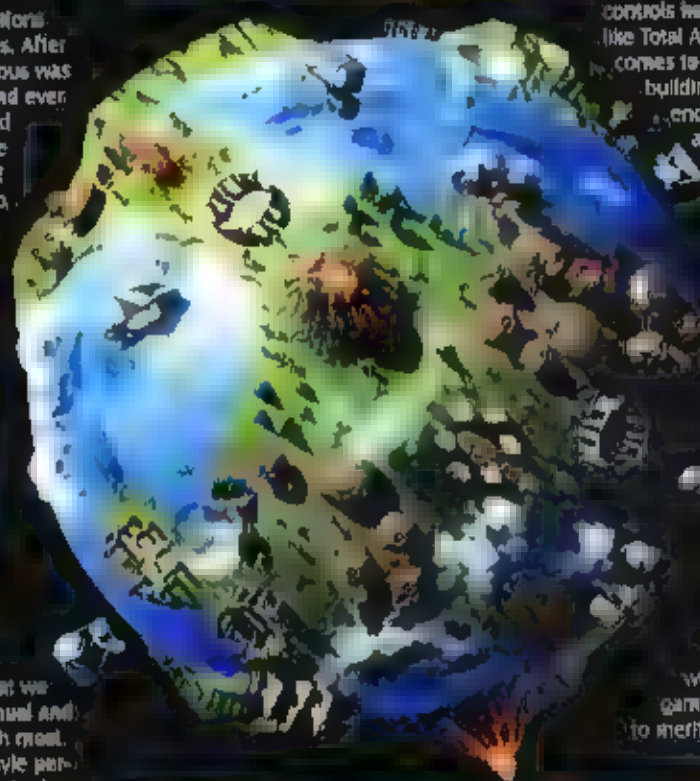
The *Populous* series of duties has a long and illustrious history. In the space of 10 years, it has become a household name.

When Bullfrog first released the short version reads as follows. About fourteen years ago two programmers, Peter Molyneux and his brother, joined forces on the Commodore Amiga to produce accounting and database software. Soon their attention turned to experimenting with games. After that the first God Simulation, *Populous* was born. It was the only game of its kind ever and was unproven commercially and therefore rejected by every software publisher bar one, Electronic Arts. It was a game where the player got to be God over a handful of people. Playing as God you had to raise and lower land so your people could build houses and progress, thereby increasing the total number of worshippers, which increased your power. This power could then be unleashed over the quivering heads of the opposing God's followers using creation-like powers such as the volcano spell and tornado spell. It was great fun and millions of people played it all over the world. History lesson over.

You even get a divine light!

So, it is with all this in mind that we peer into the box, pull out the manual and pry the CD out of the cover. As with most Bullfrog productions, quality and style pervades everything from the scant high gloss manual right down to real time drop shadows.

## POPULOUS THE BEGINNING



ning and the far away world. When it starts, you are presented with a choice of two worlds. The first is a lush, green, and fertile land. The second is a dry, barren, and rocky landscape. Selecting your people is done via a ray of divine light, which emanates from the top of the screen and all the usual group-select and click-to-move controls have been incorporated. It feels just like *Total Annihilation* or *Red Alert* when it comes to controlling your followers and building structures, but the main difference is in the size of your buildings and the unusual camera angle. As we've come to expect from Bullfrog, everything looks good and feels right. During the first few minutes of your game and after you've finished experimenting, rotating and fiddling you'll notice one other stunning feature, the music. Games like this take ages to play and more often than not the volume knob is given a violent twist to put to silence whatever music came with the game. *Populous: The Beginning* has mystical music that soothes and relaxes, akin to something you might hear on a meditation tape. First Impressions really do go a long way, and with an initial experience like this, the game in question has to do a lot wrong to merit any criticism.

Strategic smiling. Sights, sounds and presentation aside, *Populous: The Beginning* isn't a game to merit any criticism.

God n. a superhuman being worshipped as having power over nature and human affairs - **The Oxford English Dictionary**

### Action Strategy

#### Min Required Recommended

Penitence 133 Mhz  
16 MB RAM  
4 K CDROM  
2 MB VGA Video Card  
100 Mhz Hard Drive Space  
Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Penitence 200 Mhz  
32 MB RAM  
8 K CDROM  
Direct 3D Accelerator  
110 Mhz Hard Drive Space  
Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Developer Bullfrog

Publisher Electronic Arts

Supplier EA Africa  
Tel. (011) 803-1212  
RRP R 299.00

International Web Site  
www.bullfrog.co.uk

in the menu screens. It's polished and gleams, dazzling the eye and preparing you for the gaming experience ahead. In a rather drastic departure from the tried-and-tested 'Populous' formula - Bullfrog has embraced the world of 3D trickery and produced a game that looks and feels very 3D and plays as smooth as silk. The game world can be rotated along any axis and zoomed in or out with the press of a key. It's much the same as having one of those old sticky plastic globes that featured in every geography class. A standard real time strategy view has been included as well as the topographically correct close up view where everything is slanted towards the horizon so you can actually see the lay of the land. Some of the other views are either too close for comfort or any kind of strategic plan-

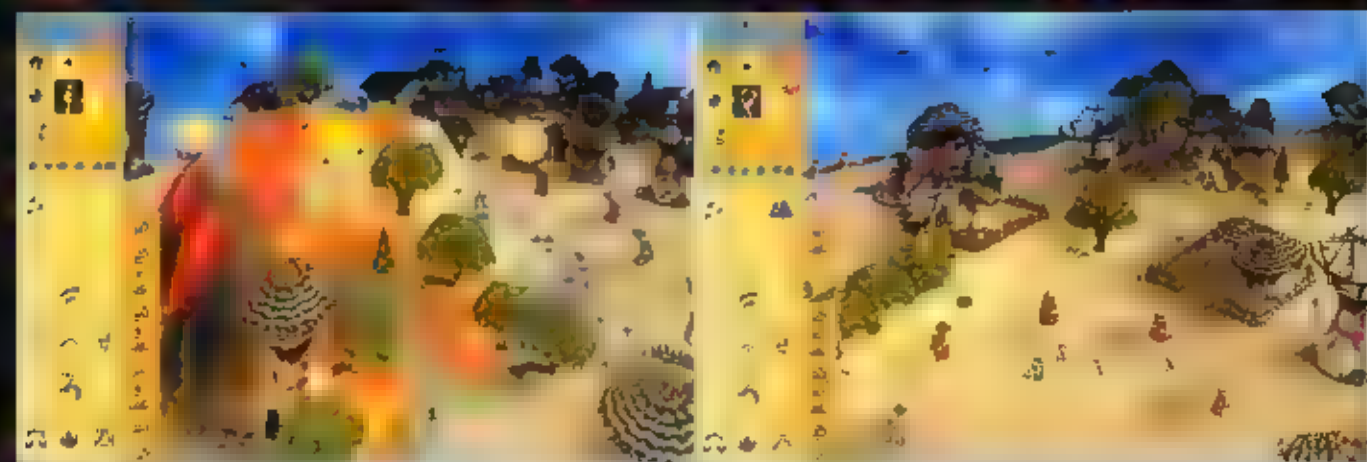
are only a handful of buildings to construct, many of which only appear later in the game. There are four different kinds of followers on offer, with available spells a little on the scant side. It starts looking like your godly powers have gone a touch rusty since the last outing. Perseverance is the key here.



## Populous 3 The Beginning (cont)

### Quick Guide SPELLS

Your shaman has a number of different spells at her disposal throughout the game. Worshipping totem poles or stone heads can attain some special spells but eventually you'll get to use them all. If you're playing against someone else then you can decide before commencing the game which spells are permitted for the game. Spells are without a doubt the key to everything and learning how to use them effectively is half the battle. This is a quick guide to all the spells in the game. Just remember to keep your followers happy or all this firepower equates down to nothing more than a wet firecracker.



Tell, tell burn, and bubble, fire burn, and bubble bubble.

Amazing artwork depicts the Populous inhabitants in 3D.



## REVIEWS UNDER FIRE

and while things start out slow, they definitely pick up towards the middle. The game runs like this. Get your people to build houses because a roof over their heads makes them happy and happy people will generate more mana for you. Mana is an ethereal substance that gives power to your Shaman so she can cast spells, the more mana produced the

faster the spells are recharged and the more damage can be done. In the previous games you could strike a blow to your enemies from anywhere on the map and there was no shaman. Now you have to get

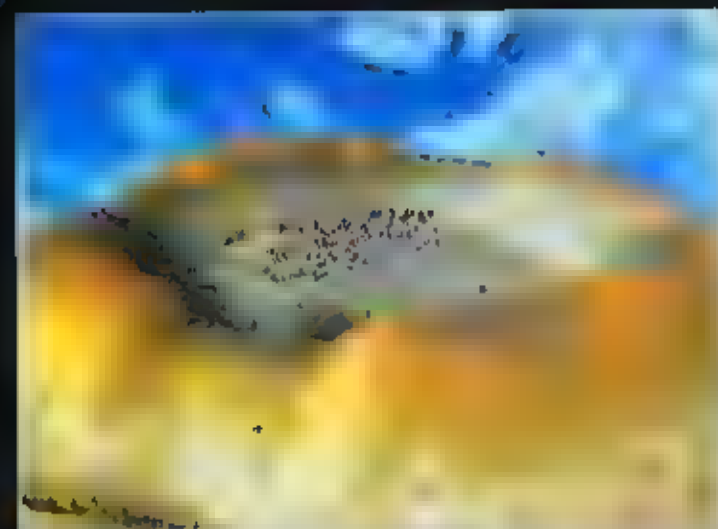
**NAG Quote -**  
**'Religion is excellent stuff for keeping common people quiet.' - Napoleon**

her close enough to the action to cast spells. An extended ring around her indicates the range of her spells, move to higher ground and your range is increased. You can build warrior training huts to train your braves into tougher warriors as well as training preachers who, if allowed close enough to the enemy, will convert them over to your side. Depending on the level you will also be able to construct buildings that allow you to build balloons and boats. The idea is to protect your shaman with a number of warriors while attacking the enemy. Including the shaman character is a stroke of genius on the part of Bullfrog as it has changed the way Populous plays, making it into a strategic game of dirty tactics and cunning planning.

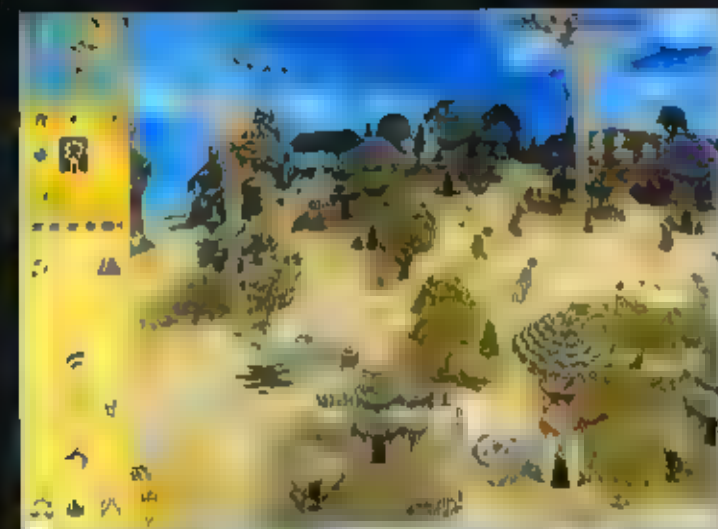
The multiple player scenario has a few interesting features on offer. You can erode the land at the beginning of the game during a time limit; hills can be raised from the ground, trees created and valleys forged. When the timer hits zero the game begins. You can also choose to turn this feature off. The game plays very much like against the computer except each game takes much longer to complete. Humans are cautious creatures and will only venture out of their caves when prodded, the pace of the game draws out and after a few cautious attacks all hell breaks loose. From a strategic point of view the combination of your shaman's spells and a number of warriors, the game turns into a rather excellent experience. A big gripe here is that each player must have a CD to join the game, this isn't a problem across the Internet but for LAN games it does irritate. Whatever happened to spawned copies of games where the game runs fine for multiplayer but not single player!

All is not well in the land

The only tiny gripe that needs to be mentioned is the average AI - it's often easy to predict how and where the next attack will come from because the computer is a bit thick and persists with previously failed attempts. Besides this minor AI problem finding fault with Populous: The Beginning is almost impossible, what it all boils down to in the end is simple preference. Technically the game is close to perfect with no graphical glitches and hundreds of nice touches, even the music and sound effects are amazing. The sliding scale looks like this. If you loved the first games then you won't be disappointed. It's a little hard to get used to the new strategic element but every now and then a little magic of the old game pokes through. If you love real time strategy titles then don't expect this game to satisfy your love of building bases and hammering the enemy. It's different and polished, and belongs in anyone's collection.



Hey, who let all the water out?



A tornado doing what it does best.

Quality and presentation have always been the common values assigned to any Bullfrog game and in this case it's no different. Yet again another masterpiece to add to their portfolio. If you want something fresh and different look no further.

92

90

91

81

89

94

[www.bullfrog.co.uk](http://www.bullfrog.co.uk)

Populous: The Beginning (PC/SPX) (4 Players) (Modem) (2 Players)

Populous: The Beginning (PC/SPX) (4 Players) (Modem) (2 Players)

Presentations: Stupid Artificial Intelligence - Graphics: Strategically Challenging

OVERALL RATING

90

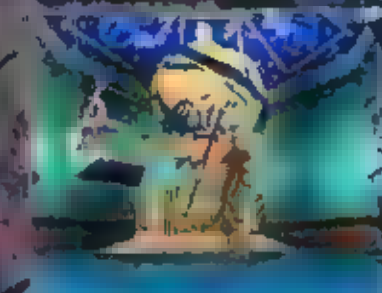
## Populous 3 The Beginning (cont)

## WELCOME TO YOUR NEW RELIGION

# HERETIC II



The Beauty of the Heretic II engine is that it's a 3D environment of striking architecture and underground dungeons that are in no way less than



Seeing is believing. The enhanced Quake II engine delivers fluid 3-D animation and fast-moving action.



The Beauty of the Heretic II engine is that it's a 3D environment of striking architecture and underground dungeons that are in no way less than



Seeing is believing. The enhanced Quake II engine delivers fluid 3-D animation and fast-moving action.



Mutand  
WAREHOUSE





The electronic era has spawned some interesting and contestable issues in recent times. Excessive video game violence and the potential for moral corruption that the Internet has been accused of are just two. Perhaps an interesting diversion from all this negativity is the birth of something totally new, the electronic sex symbol. Lara Croft and the Tomb Raider franchise are single-handedly responsible for creating this new phenomenon and they are getting plenty of mileage from it with this third Tomb Raider game.



## TOMB RAIDER III

3rd Person Adventure

Pentium 166... 16 MB RAM 4 X CDROM 7 MB SVGA Video Card 10 Mb Hard Drive Space Win 95/98 (DirectX 6.0)

Core Design

Eidos Interactive

EA Africa Tel: (011) 803-4212 R 299.00

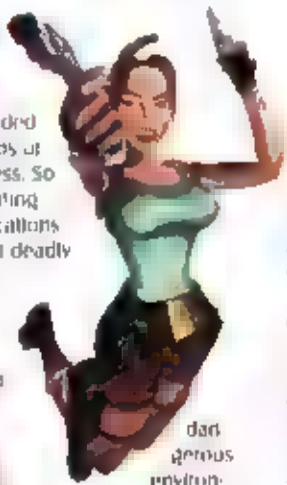
www.eidosinteractive.com

If you've been foolhardy enough to miss the first two Tomb Raider games then now is the best time ever to get acquainted with that luscious adventuring archaeologist Lara Croft. Play any of the two previous games and you'll find yourself either dodging huge boulders, making heart-stopping leaps to safety or escaping hungry jungle cats. The reason behind all these death-defying acts is a simple one of adventure. In this latest chapter of the Tomb Raider saga we see our lovely heroine in a number of exotic locales such as India, where she must escape tigers and piranhas. Nevada and London are two other real world scenarios that will test the mettle of even the most adventure hardened players. The South Pacific Isles and finally Antarctica make up the rest of the game's huge levels. With a new traditional flare and style, the opening sequence shows the ancient impact site of a meteor that long ago hunted through the atmosphere and crashed into the Earth. When the meteor impacted, the surrounding area was a lush jungle environment that today is better known as Antarctica. A group of men are drilling at the site and getting some strange readings on the shattered remains of the meteor. On another tangent a battered journal is also discovered detailing the forations of the rest of the artifacts. This sets a predictable background for Tomb Raider III and gives players something to hunt for. Lara is unaware of the history behind the meteor and is currently in India trying to find an ancient powerful artifact that just so happens to be one of the

fragments of the meteor.

Now where did I bury that bone?

If you haven't figured it out by now, you are the sexy heroine of the series. Lara Croft. Much like Indiana Jones, she searches the globe for items of archaeological value while also writing novels to pay for her outlandish life style. Working from this basis the developers have an almost unlimited creative license when it comes to level design and creating imaginative deadly traps. The game is viewed from an erratic third person camera that zooms around the level while keeping Lara the main focus of attention. This camera has zoomed something of a legend in the



gaming community with two sides divided over whether it helps or hinders your progress. So we now have a floating camera, exciting locations and one nimble but deadly heroine. It all fits together with stunning levels and a sense of high adventure. The idea is to negotiate the



Cocked, loaded and ready to rock and roll.

finding all the secrets in a particular level is akin to watching an entire movie and then not being able to see the end.

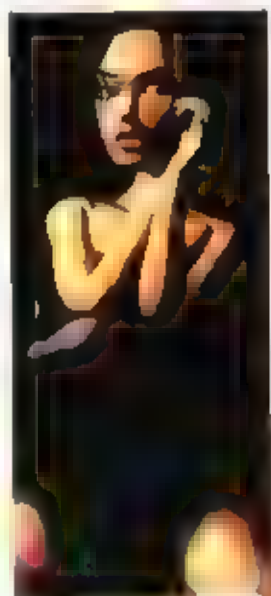
On all fours

If all this sounds a little daunting, then visiting Lara's home before you embark on your quest will help you to practise. Those gymnasiums are necessary to navigate the lethal world outside. Inside her large mansion you will find a training course that takes players a step at a time along the road to successful adventuring. Improving on the previous games the developers have seen fit to include a few new moves in Lara's already impressive collection. One of them is the duck and crawl that is useful for getting into small confined places. By holding a key Lara can now sprint for a limited amount of time. But the most radical new move must be the monkey swing, which allows her to access seemingly impossible to reach places. Her house also has a few hidden surprises for persistent players and finding the key to the area where the hidden maze used to be will require a little persistence and lateral thinking. In this area you can get to race against the clock with a Quad Bike. The vehicles have also received a major overhaul and now you'll get to use an under

(cont)

water propulsion unit as well as a kayak.

Once finished with the training you begin the game in India. After completing all the levels in India you can choose where next to go. This level selection process is a new addition to the game and allows players to choose which location to play next. After completing all the areas it's on to Antarctica for the final showdown. The levels are exquisitely designed and there is always an overwhelming feeling of vastness. To such a degree that you often keep backtracking just to make sure you didn't miss anything. The maps are also a little brighter thanks to some coloured lighting and a number of new special effects. Translucent smoke and a whistling water effects are all present and accounted for. The first bad guys you'll encounter are monkeys, tigers and snakes. Later on military police, wizards and tribesmen make an appearance. Some of the enemies are actually allies so it pays not to shoot every thing that moves. In one area prison inmates actually help you escape by thumping the security guard. The focus this time around is aimed away from action and the levels are sparsely populated with things to shoot at. This third game is all about exploring and not fighting. The first few levels are relatively easy to complete and only really provide enough challenge to get Lara's muscles stretched. Later on though things get a little harder and the timing required for some jumps and



Words slide in at this point.

secret areas can only be described as frightening.

Ghost in the machine

Tomb Raider III is simply brilliant. This third game represents the pinnacle of the series and it's hard to imagine what more they could do with the current engine than they already have. Some of the annoying problems have carried through from the first and second games but essentially these bugs are quickly forgotten once you start playing. The Tomb Raider world is incredibly addictive hunting for secrets becomes an obsession and exploring each of the games huge levels requires a serious time commitment. If you look at the big picture nothing much has really changed and even the new weapons coloured lighting and special effects are not enough to hide this dated formula. But don't consider this to be a negative point. Far from it. By not changing the way the game plays and looks

the developers have managed to retain that special feel. It's the feeling you get after successfully completing a sequence of jumps or finding the final secret of a level. Satisfaction and frustration go hand in hand as you progress through the game. It's familiar territory all the way and while this may be criticised more harshly elsewhere, all it equates to is more of the same thing everyone wants. The only way to adequately describe playing Tomb Raider III is like slipping on your most comfortable pair of shoes.

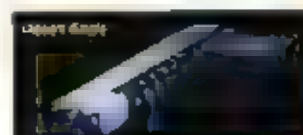
The weapons are slightly different in this third instalment. Some nice explosions and special effects add to the overall thrill when hunting down and terminating enemies. Some secret areas often reveal ammunition and weapons so finding them all really does pay off in a big way.



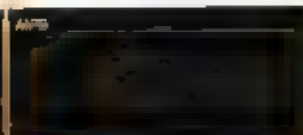
These are your basic point and shoot weapons. Nothing special except for the fact that they never run out of ammunition. So taking down targets from a distance with these is a safe rather than more valuable ammunition.



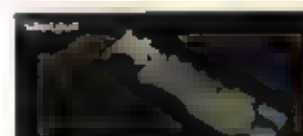
I went for the quick removal of bad guys, these rapid firing machine guns can eat ammunition like popcorn.



The famous Desert Eagle is a powerful but biased - a single bullet from this gun is usually enough. Easily identified by its screaming roar followed by loud screaming.



The MP5 is based on the Heckler and Koch MP5 9mm Submachine Gun and as any terrorist will tell you they work rather well.



This single shot pump action shotgun takes long to reload but tips through the bad guys like hot lead through flesh. An excellent close range weapon.



With its humble beginnings in Quake the rocket launcher has become a firm favourite in the gaming community. Best used against everything - provided you can find these elusive tanks.



Small explosive projectiles always prove useful when trying to clear enemies out of confined spaces.



Early development information rumoured the appearance of a simple hunting knife for Lara to use underwater. This is what happened to it. Useful when dealing with H2O foes.

Many people will complain that this third game is just more of the same. In our books that can only be a good thing. Considering all the cosmetic touches and huge levels this third game is the best of the lot. Tomb Raider III is pure gaming immersion.

89

87

91

88

89

93

www.tombraider.com

None

Worst: 2 Southern Dugout Tomb Raider

It's More Tomb Raider: 5 Missing Problems: 4 Huge Levels: 4 Bounding challenge: 4

OVERALL RATING

90





## Baldur's Gate

I doubt there have been many games in the history of gaming that have been as highly anticipated as Baldur's Gate. After being in development for what seems like forever, Bioware has finally released probably one of the best role playing games of all time.

- Soul Assassin

**B**aldur's Gate is set in the mystic world of TSR's best selling Forgotten Realms campaign, the most popular of the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons roleplaying worlds. The story starts as your other tells you to make ready for a long journey. He gives you no reason, no destination and no clue as to what to take with you. As the journey starts, danger strikes and your father dies saving your life. Now you have nothing to go on except a destination, the Friendly Arm Inn where you are to meet up with friends. Besides all the problems surrounding you, the area is experiencing strange phenomena where all the metal ore is discovered and crumbles away almost as soon as it is laid into every day items. Including weapons. Bandits on the main roads do not hold for previous jewels or gold anymore but for iron and steel, killing anyone that possesses such items. Your father

is finding out how you fit into all of this and out a step or two. The party are many, the most dangerous and you only have your wits and skills to help you prevail.

As you visit the many locations in Baldur's Gate such as Beregonth, Nashell, the odd dungeon or haunted ruin to name but a few, you will encounter the friendly and not so friendly people of the Sword Coast. They will give you opportunities to fulfil numerous sub-quests and by helping them out you will hopefully learn more about the crisis surrounding the iron shortage. These quests can be played in a non-linear fashion although it is advisable that you stick to the story and follow the destinations proposed to you, unless you want your party to line up against monsters they are not ready or are met with an untimely death.

Just finishing the game without taking each and every sub-quest can take up to 100 hours and 150 hours if you choose to do them all. Too often we fork out our

### Role Playing Game

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 166 16 MB RAM 4 x CD-ROM 2 Mb SVGA Video Card 100 Mb Hard Drive Space Windows DIRECTX 3.0	Pentium 200 16 MB RAM 8 x CD-ROM 600 Mb Hard Drive Space 4 Mb SVGA 4 bit Win 95/98 DirectX 3.0

Developer: Bioware Corp

Publisher: Interplay

Supplier: EA Africa  
Tel: (011) 803-4212  
RRP: R 299.00

International Web Site  
www.interplay.com

hard earned cash for games that are easily finished in a couple of days and are the first to see a complete such as Bioware giving the game value a money with a game that can last as long as Baldur's Gate.

The game is based on the AD&D rules of TSR and uses a slightly modified version of them. All races

and classes available to players in a run AD&D game are available in Baldur's Gate. Everything from Elves to Dwarves and Wizards to Rangers can be played giving the game a good variety for house rules. Although it is not easy to know the AD&D rules to play Baldur's Gate, it is advisable that you know about all the rest. The places are different and classes. They are only covered in the 160-page manual but more information is given in the AD&D's Player's Handbook should you already own one.

Unfortunately, Bioware's do have an eye for a prize but it is not implemented in Bioware's that no one gets too powerful for long even if you start on the same team when any add-ons or sequels arrive.

Baldur's Gate utilizes a basic point and click interface with a simple inventory character statistics and party management.

Besides the somewhat slow if the world where everything is controlled. It is not that the game you have the opportunity to control the party of characters and therefore the interface layout must be as visible and easy to use. It does take some time to learn all the gestures on the interface but once mastered it makes combat situations so much easier to handle with all keyboard shortcuts and on-click spell casting.

Of course, it makes all of these interface features so useful is the combat engine. Unlike most RPG games who either have a real-time combat system or a turn-based one, Bioware chose to use a hybrid and real-time engine that is very easy to use. Combat can be paused to give orders to all your party members and then resumed so they may execute them. This allows for strategic real-time enemy infiltration and anyone trying to play the game wholly real time will find it difficult indeed.

Not since Ultima 7: The Black Gate have I had so much fun playing a RPG. The world is so big, makes you feel almost lost. 10,000 smiling game world is all fully rendered in 16 bit color, bring the world to life as you explore and probe every

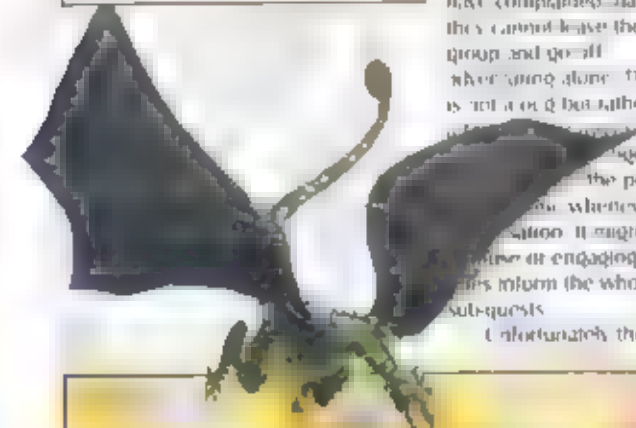
## Baldur's Gate (cont)

### Vol's Guide to the Sword Coast

A great addition to Baldur's Gate comes in the form of Vol's Guide to the Sword Coast by Dr. Greenwald. His book tells the townsfolk of the Sword Coast and is a handy guidebook to find out where all the hotspots are, everything from where pirates go to drink to where to find haunted old ruins is explained by one of the most knowledgeable of these parts. Please just make sure you don't travel to all the dangerous places without being properly equipped. It would be a pity to find out the book stopped with all the adventures and adventures. Baldur's Gate is a masterpiece of role playing. Baldur's Gate is a masterpiece of role playing.

### Also spoke

While an intelligent discussion is being held in Baldur's Gate, a member of the party is assigned a task. A simple control line then indicates that the task is complete. It is not that the game is not a masterpiece of role playing. Baldur's Gate is a masterpiece of role playing. Baldur's Gate is a masterpiece of role playing.



nook and cranny for clues and the ever elusive magical item. The locations are exquisitely detailed and draw you into the world that is Baldur's Gate while the ever present background music sets the mood. There are also real-time environmental effects such as rain, snow, lightning and fog plus dynamic full colour lighting effect like lamps and magical spells to add it all to the world. When all these elements come together as seamlessly as they do in Baldur's Gate, any RPG fan will know that Bioware has put their heart and soul into this product.

Not only is Baldur's Gate a stunning and immersive single player game, but it can also be played with up to 16 other adventures via a LAN or over the Internet. This is probably Baldur's Gate's most attractive feature and the reason why the game sold out almost immediately in the States. In what other game can an adventure be so good and explore an authentic AD&D world interact with characters, raid dungeons and purge the world from evil?

The multiplayer game has exactly the same story as the single player game, the only difference being that instead of you controlling six characters, individual players can now control each of them.

One thing to remember about the multiplayer aspect of Baldur's Gate is that the game relies on everyone to work as a group. No one can go off on their lonesome selves to do what they want. A lot of people have complained that they cannot leave the group and go off when going alone. This is not a bug but rather a feature.

Another feature that the popup dialogue that comes up whenever a party member talks to a NPC. It might interrupt you while trying to engage a monster in combat but it does inform the whole group of the story and any sub-quests.

Unfortunately the multiplayer does have one



The Grand Canyon has nothing on this place

annoying interface feature in the buy and sell mechanism used. Every character playing has to wait as others in the party do their buying and selling, slow as it is, it is annoying that they will be looking into this and hoped they will be a patch soon.

There are also some problems with random crashes, which Bioware is also looking into. The majority of problems come from different hardware configurations but installing the latest DirectX 6 drivers for any sound and video devices can solve most of these problems.

Overall Baldur's Gate has to be the best RPG in recent years and any good RPG fan will agree. Excellent graphics, sound, story and art makes for an engaging adventure. In fact, I would

with a 100+ hours of play the game is good value for money. Bioware has also announced an add-on that should be available in the first half of 1999 to continue the adventure and develop your character to higher levels. If you're an RPG fan don't just sit there, run out and buy this game - it might just be sold out by the time you get there.



Soul Assassin

Baldur's Gate is the definitive RPG game released in the last 12 months. Based on TSR's Forgotten Realms Campaign and utilizing AD&D rules, the game offers all the races and classes combined with a story of mystery and intrigue. If there is only one RPG that is a definite must buy, then Baldur's Gate has to be it.

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Random Campaign  
XP Cap

OVERALL RATING

93





With South Africa's favourite English league reaching the halfway point in the league and the World Cup forgotten, it's with little surprise we see yet another FIFA title hit the shelves. But after the success of FIFA 98 - Road to the World Cup, can Electronic Arts impress us enough to take our hard earned Rands for the third time this year? As things may have it, Electronic Arts have not only earned that honour but have taken us to the next level of designing sports games.



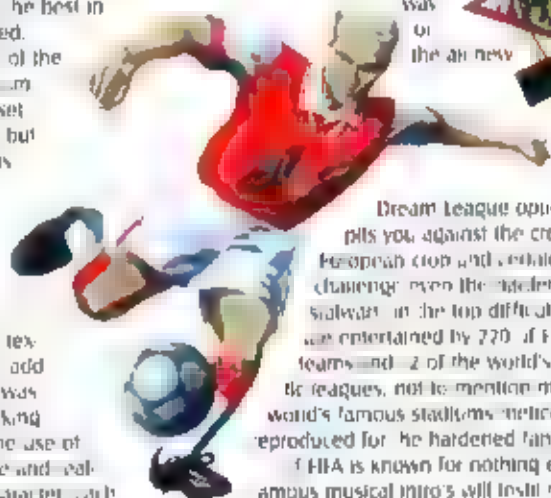
The boots are rib crossed, the deep leather rubbed in, the socks meticulously fastened. The heart beats racing at a less than normal speed as you enter the tunnel and hear the crowds screaming for their hero just another day at the office for some and a pipe dream for millions who have wished to experience those same feelings but these same sense tapping feelings are about to be touched with the best in football sims ever produced.

With the third release of the series in the same year, I'm sure Electronic Arts have set records for their audacity, but rest assured, each title has grown with leaps and bounds and FIFA 99 is no different.

The first impressions of change in the animations which combined with new graphical textures and lighting effects add supreme realism to what was already an impressive looking game. The players with the use of motion capture are lifelike and realistic in movement and character, each player has particular skills and EA have added real life player heights to add even more to the playability especially if you have

the odd tall attacker.

As the FIFA 99 slogan was all the players, all the leagues and all the cups. Yes they are all there including all the player transfers that effected the 1998/99 season. A special addition comes by the way of the all new



Dream League option, which pits you against the cream of the European crop and certainly will challenge even the hardened FIFA stalwarts in the top difficulty level. You are entertained by 770 of Europe's top teams and 2 of the world's top 10 leagues, not to mention most of the world's famous stadiums meticulously reproduced for the hardened fan.

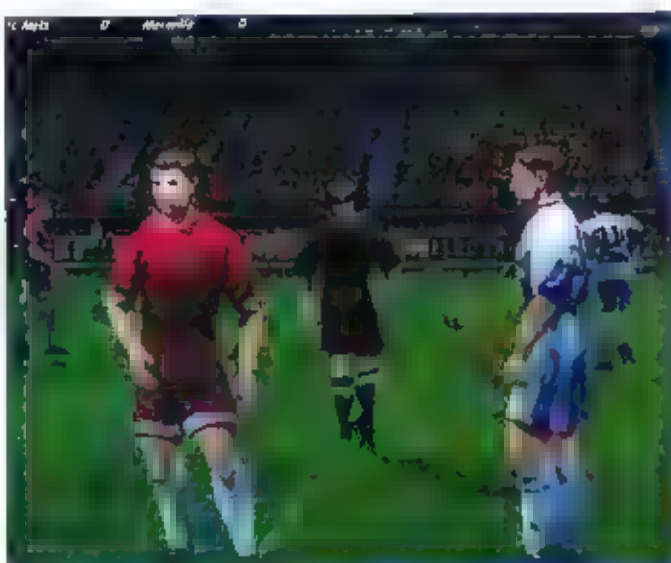
If FIFA is known for nothing else then its famous musical intro's will instil memories past the millennium. Tailor Slim entertain

us with 'Rockateller' Shaka the same tune to this title and add that to enter the best, sporting intro's around and you have an awe inspiring beginning to an awe inspiring game. The stadium chants and sounds are incredibly realistic, bringing the game a step closer to perfection. Commentaries have always been a highlight of the FIFA franchise but after many repetitive and strangely amusing comments became an irritating feature of the game. Now the team of John Motson

Chris Waddle and welcome newcomer Mark Lawrenson engross us with timeous responses that relate to the actions on the pitch with very few exceptions and a excellent degree of play calling.

But the standout feature of FIFA 99 is most certainly the playability and game play. Faster ball control, faster player acceleration and new instant player response have taken FIFA 99 more than a few steps ahead of its competitors as ease it changes the way we play football sims. The referees deal with bone crunching challenges in the normal harsh ways, but then the odd tackle is also unpunished, leaving an element of uncertainty on who to expect. Players respond quicker and realistically with instant response to your control patterns. A special mention must be made of the celebratory actions when scoring goals, receiving a yellow card for a foul, they reek with realism. New animated goal movements and really fit gestures are excellent to watch and not bothersome when many matches played.

For the first time you have semi-control of your keeper that immerses you even further into the game. AI marking is the best yet seen



A perfect time to shin kick your opponent without the referee looking

## FIFA 99

(cont)

### FIFA 99 Special Moves

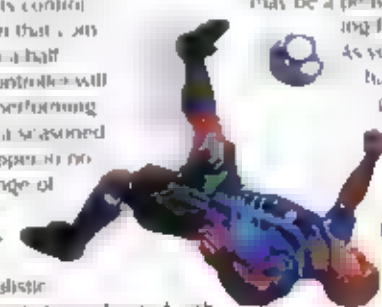
<b>Backheel</b> This allows you to pass backwards without changing direction.	<b>Overhead Kick</b> For Ralinho's kick, flick ball over opponent without changing direction.
<b>Sidewind Pass</b> A fake side and quick pass which fools opponents.	<b>Direction Changer</b> Pass ball the right legs to change direction and maintain momentum.
<b>Overhead</b> This is a subtle move, it is a powerful shot for deliveries at goal height.	<b>360° Shield</b> Shield ball as you turn back to turn in degrees and to control the ball in a tight circle.
<b>The Dive</b> Famous in the Italian leagues and been seen in the FA Premier, this move is...	<b>Header</b> The defensive and highly effective defensive header is a low ball with the tall attacker.

and with a little observation you'll notice that no player stands idly around, they always seem to be challenging your controlled player.

There are plenty of in game options that can be configured to change levels of realism and difficulty. Speaking of difficulty, don't expect to win anything on your first attempt, even if you are a FIFA 99 guru. On the hardest

of the three levels expect to be challenged to your limits and if you do happen to win a cup or two then you can congratulate yourself. Master of this game, I will say the level 2 difficulty was a little on the easy side after about two days of playing, leaving me with little time but to challenge the AI at its toughest, going in to its domination more than a few times.

One of the biggest assets of FIFA 99 is its control mechanism that is combined with a half decent controller will have you performing actions of a seasoned footballer in no time. A range of new special moves are added, some realistic and an easy to be performed with a click of only 2 buttons if you have an 8-button controller. The overhead kick and step over turn as well as the wing back pass have become strong moves in my arsenal of game tactics. EA



have alleviated the difficulties normally associated with performing such moves. FIFA 99 has many more options that I'm sure will fit in with each and every gamers personal playing style.

FIFA 99 has taken us ever closer to that milestone of perfection, if there is a fault that can be found it would be with its interface which is not up to the FIFA standards. This may be a petty comment but then can reach

ing for downloads with the product. As you may well tell from the review, I have thoroughly enjoyed the game beyond any other sporting title in my collection. I will without a doubt be playing FIFA 99 well beyond its lifetime, mostly because I have found a playing buddy with similar feelings of FIFA power. We have made use of the multi player aspects and are overwhelmed at the excitement that can be given if playing against a human opponent. This is sports gaming at its best and must be tried to experience the full potential of this title.

Storm

### Sports Simulation

Min Required	Recommended
Pentium 333 MHz 16 MB RAM 6X CDROM 2MB SVGA Display Card 20 MB Hard Drive Space Win 95/98 DirectX 6.0	Pentium 200 MHz 32 MB RAM 8X CDROM 30 MB Hard Drive Space 160 MB Hard Drive Space Win 95/98 DirectX 6.0

Developer: EA Sports

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Supplier: EA Africa  
Tel: (011) 803-1212  
RRP: R 299.00

Local Web Site  
www.ea.co.za

There can be only one, and this is it. EA are about to test themselves to the limit if they are to create the best FIFA 99 off the high seas. It has created. Supreme playability, superb and realism take FIFA 99 beyond the boundaries of acceptable simulation. Get it!

93

91

94

NA

95

95

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FIFA 99  
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Sensible Soccer

• Graphically Stunning  
• Incredible Realism  
• Superb Control

• Soundtrack  
• Soundtrack

OVERALL  
RATING

94



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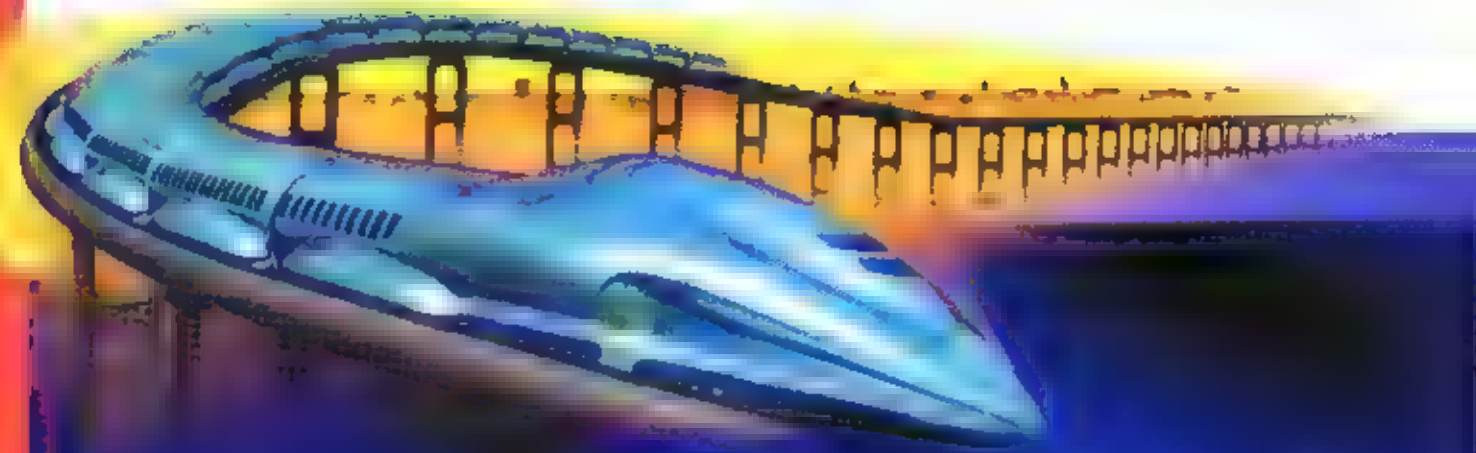
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Half-Life is quite simply the most impressive game I have ever played. I have been looking forward to its arrival since I first saw a preview at E3 in 1997. But when it missed its scheduled release in November that year, I wondered whether it would still feature, faced with competition from games like Quake II. Although Half-Life won awards for best action game and best PC game at E3 a year later, the arrival of Unreal seemed the final straw. There was no way that Half-Life, which used the Quake II engine, was going to be able to compete with this - or so I thought.

# HALF-LIFE

Was I wrong or what? The game is awesome. Filled to the seams with heart-pumping action, plenty of eye-candy, and more realism than you've ever seen in a game before. Half-Life is an adrenaline junkie's dream and is the only fix you're going to need for a while. Sierra is new to the first-person-shooter genre and this is Valve's first product - but I really don't think that this is a case of beginner's luck. Half-Life has been crafted with loving care and Sierra have shown a degree of restraint, not often seen by software developers in not releasing the game before it was ready. What makes Half-Life the best first-person shooter available is the atmosphere and sense of realism it creates. From the graphics to music and story, Half-Life exudes a life of its own. It has the most believable game world ever created. Valve have crafted a game which is almost cinematic in quality, and have managed to write

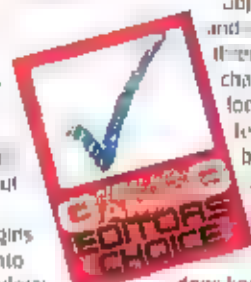


a story line which includes many of the techniques used in horror movies and successfully built this into a really great computer game.

The game begins with a train ride into the Black Mesa Federal Research Facility which is housed in an old missile base. You play a research physicist called Gordon Freeman where you work in the anomalous materials department. As I descended slowly through the numerous levels of the research complex, and through a number of hefty security doors, I began to wonder how the hell I was going to get out of here. I knew enough of the game to understand that getting out the Black Mesa Federal Research Facility was at least part of the plot.

One of the first things you will notice is the amount of detail in the various game characters. Their movement and appearance is uncannily life-like. Some of the characters are built out of as

many as fifty thousand objects. This has a down side though and developers have only two or three versions of each non-playing character so all the guards you meet look the same and there are only a few variations of the scientists. It's a bit odd at first like wandering around in a horror movie. It is that really you John. I'm sure I saw you get eaten by that hairy monster a few minutes ago. Odd or not, it does keep the level of complexity and processing down, making the game much more



## 1st Person Shooter

M

Requires: 133 Mhz Pentium, 24 MB RAM, 2 X CDROM, 2MB SVGA16-bit, 500 MB Hard Drive Space, Win 95/98 DirectX 6.0

Pentium 166 - 32 MB RAM, 8 X CDROM, 3D Acc. (VxD), 500 MB, 400 MB Hard Drive Space, Win 95/98 DirectX 6.0

Valve Software

Sierra Studios

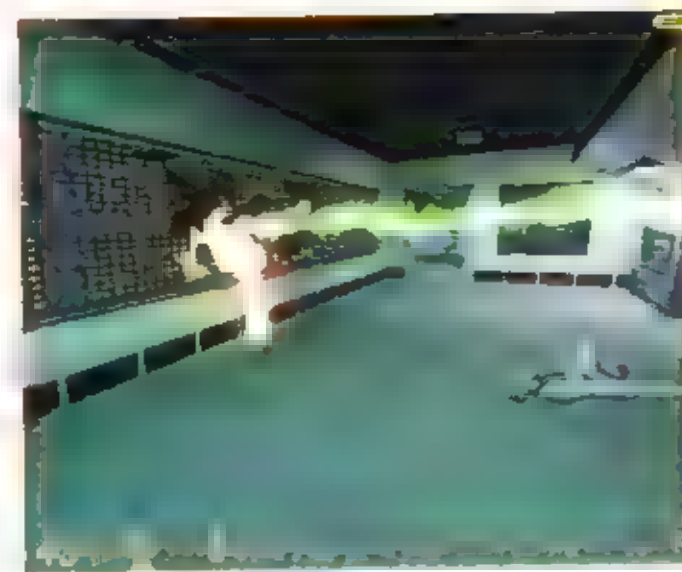
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## Half-Life

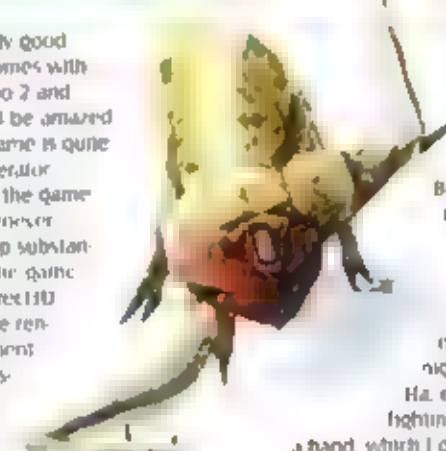
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playable than it would be otherwise.

Having said that, the performance is really good. Like all decent games these days, Half-Life comes with excellent 3D support for cards like the Voodoo 2 and Riva TNT. Although owners of these cards will be amazed at the level of detail and performance, the game is quite playable without a top of the range 3D accelerator. Running on my old AMD-233 with Voodoo 2, the game was quite smooth at 800 x 600 although whenever things got a bit frantic the frame-rate did drop substantially. Playing with an old ATI graphics card, the game was still quite playable at 640 x 480 using DirectX but was a little jerky when I enabled software rendering only. Plenty of kudos to the development team for keeping the system specs in a really nice level.

Game play is quite different from most action games. You'd better get used to talking to guards and scientists rather than



dimensional portals and are bow eating everyone they come across. You need to get the hell out of there as soon as possible but unfortunately the explosion has damaged many of the doors and you need to crawl and fight your way back to the surface.

The aliens are pretty weird and not that bright. Be careful of the little crab like critters - they do far more damage than something their size should be capable of. I found the first section reasonably easy and after having dodged laser beams, narrowly avoiding electrocution, swimming through water polluted with enough radiation to make me glow at night, all whilst fighting off monsters, it felt like a real nightmare. I finally made my way back to the surface. Ha, easy I thought as I came across a group of marines fighting a bunch of lightning-welding-monsters. Let me lend a hand, which I duly did only to find the marines started shooting at me as though I were one of the aliens. Well, I highlighted it out of there wondering what I had done. Had I been infected, taken over by an alien like in the movie 'The Thing'? Well it was a lot simpler than that. It turns out that the government decided to sanitise the entire facility and ensure that nothing got out alive, and as the person who had started it all, I was currently

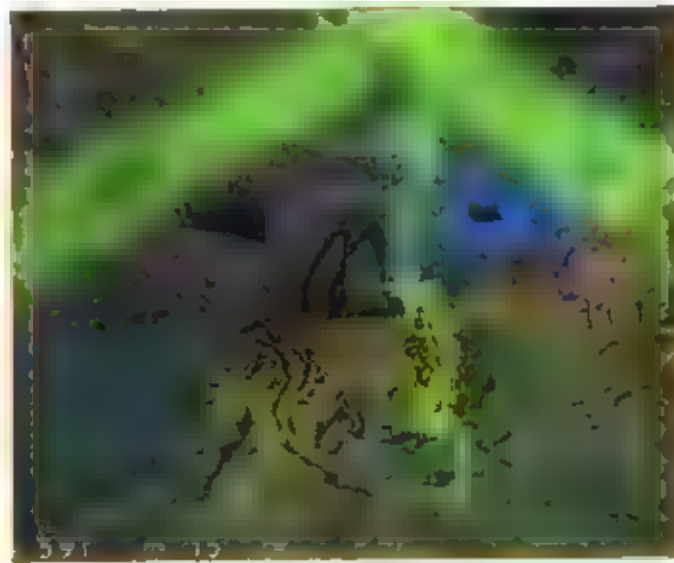
*As I descended slowly through the numerous levels of the research complex, and through a number of hefty security doors, I began to wonder how the hell I was going to get out of there.*

shooting everyone, as these NPCs are critical to your success. Guards will help you to fight if you ask them, and if you are really nasty, they can be used to distract the enemy. Scientists will sometimes heal you and will also open doors that you might not have access to. After you have entered the complex you will be told to report to the research lab to carry out an important experiment on a strange crystalline sample. Before you will be allowed to enter the lab, you will need to collect your hazardous environment suit (HEV), a sort of multipurpose armour, which will help protect you from acid, radiation and absorb some of the damage when you get shot. The HEV requires power to be effective but there are batteries and recharge points scattered throughout the game. As you expect, your experiment goes horribly wrong. Somehow, the crystalline sample causes a dimensional portal to open in the base. The result is a huge explosion that destroys part of the complex and you are stuck in the middle of it when a portal opens which puts you in

Words cannot describe the effects - sound, lights, action. Just don't be playing this on a 21-inch screen if your folks are around - they might just think they're having a flashback. If you're the folks playing the game - hey dude, be cool, it's so way out, I just dig the vibes man...er back to reality! After being zapped through a couple of weird dimensions, you find yourself still in the lab, which has been completely destroyed by the explosion. What has happened is that a bunch of really unpleasant aliens have entered the research complex through the



I spy with my little eye something beginning with dead.



If you ever happen to open your toilet lid call a plumber.



401125









The long wait is finally over, Quest for Glory fans everywhere can rejoice now that number five has hit the shelves. Back are the days of striving to become a hero, and who knows, romance might just be around the corner in this sequel of the ever-popular series.

## QUEST for GLORY DRAGON FIRE

Thinking back to my earlier PC gaming days I remember the Quest for Glory series fondly. I spent many an hour running through the woods in Spindburg trying to raise my characters' statistics and mapping out the forest as hand as I went. Some of you might ever remember that Quest for Glory was originally called Hero's Quest.

Since then Quest for Glory has come far, boasting 4 sequels and a loyal fan base. Now after two years in development at Sierra, here's the fifth playing adventure series with a fourth sequel named Quest for Glory V: Dragon Fire.

This time you, hero, is summoned to find the king's assassin in the wonderful and mystical land of Simaria. To accomplish this you are to enter the Rights of Rulership yourself and try to become king since the assassin is certainly bound to

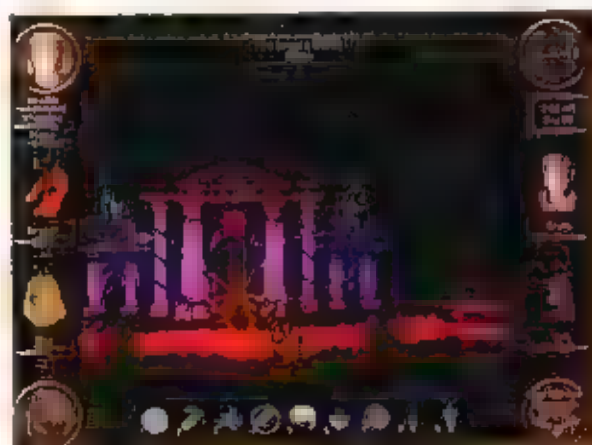


The inside of the NAG offices. (see right)

Quest for Glory games and renew your friendships. Seeing as how and Lantis brought back memories, and Katrina, Hsi von Spindburg and Tiana also join the cast from yesterday.

As always there are three different types of characters that can be played: the fighter, the mage, or the thief. These are not just cosmetic post-plays of your character but determine the path he will follow through the game. Each character approaches problems and puzzles differently: the fighter needs to be steady, the fighter bold and strong, while the mage user relies on his mystical power to overcome obstacles. For those who are fortunate to have saved a bad character somewhere there is good news. As with previous QFG games you are able to import characters from them, unfortunately the Paladin class is only available as an imported character.

Gone are the days of the sprite-based worlds in QFG. In Dragon Fire, Yosemite Entertainment employs a 3D world filled with



kill off all competition. Sounds easy enough but along the way you need a help out the needy and take on odd jobs. A chance you'll find adventure in the junk down. There is also a prophecy involving a Dragon waiting to be fulfilled, and should it come true our hero might just be in for the fight of his life.

The story grabs your attention right away and is as original as the beautifully portrayed scenery found throughout the world of Simaria. From the Drivad woods to the underwater world of Atlantis, each captures your attention through the detail and splendid colours used. Along the way you meet old friends from previous

### Adventure RPG

Pentium 66+  
10 MB RAM  
6 X CDROM  
640x480 SVGA Card 100 MB  
350 MB Hard Drive Space  
Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Pentium 200+  
32 MB RAM  
8 X CDROM  
4 MB SVGA Card  
350 MB Hard Drive Space  
Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)

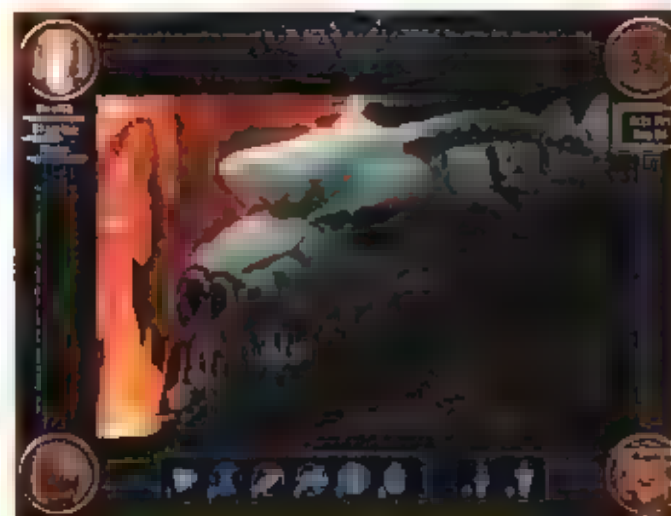
Yosemite Entertain.

Sierra FX

Datatec Crew  
Tel: (011) 233-1111  
R 299.00

www.qg5.com

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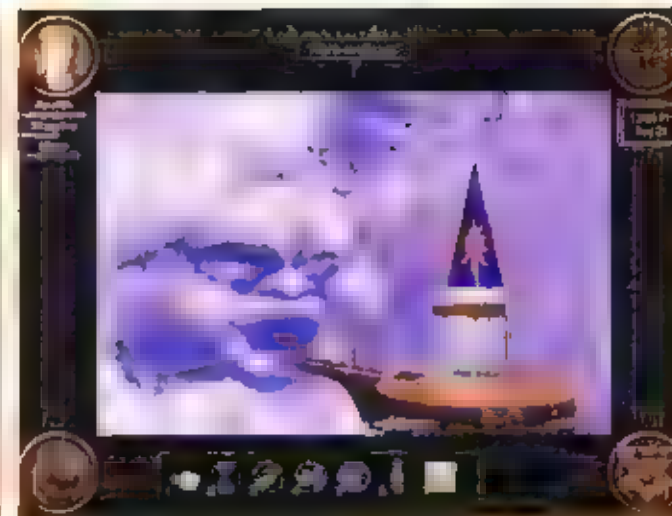


Has anyone seen Alice lately?

detail and set against colourful backdrops. Unlike most games today, QFG 5 uses a soft ware based 3D engine and avoids the problem of the washed-out look we all are so familiar with in 3D accelerated games. The new engine makes you feel right at home and maintains the traditional feel of the QFG series.

Music and sound effects is another area where Yosemite deserves applause. The

a week and avid adventurers can finish the game in two days. Even playing as all three classes will not alleviate your life span due to the fact that all of them follow the same basic story and do all the same sub-quests. It is fun up to a point to play through the classes but then just becomes plain boring. Yosemite should have added more sub-quests and made some of them specific to the different classes to add in the enjoyment of replaying



SAA will need to rethink their strategies with this kind of competition

soundtrack in QFG 5 is one of the best in 1998 and they captured the essence of each of the varying series with immersive backdrops and realistic sound effects. The soundtrack is also remastered to be released as an audio CD-ROM or the die-hard QFG quester.

While QFG 5 is an excellent game, it does have one fatal flaw and that is its continuity. Most gamers will play through the game in

the game.

There is a hope on the horizon though. Sierra's working on a multiplayer add-on which will enable friends to play together. We saw this feature here at NAG. In the beta version we received but unfortunately most of the features were not implemented and unstable which is probably why it was left out of the final version and destined for a later patch. Judging from the beta version we had, characters will be able to play as any one of the contestants in the Rights of Rulership and compete against each other to become king.

QFG 5 has its fair share of bugs. While I didn't encounter any of them while playing, Sierra have confirmed bugs ranging from random crashes to problems with importing characters. They are currently working on a patch to address these issues and are constantly keeping fans up-to-date on the message board found at the QFG web site.

The bottom line for anyone wanting to purchase this game is that they should weigh up the pros and the cons. While QFG V is an excellent game, if you're a QFG fan it doesn't offer much replayability until the multiplayer patch is out. For now I would only recommend it to the avid QFG fan or anyone looking to get started in the RPG Adventure genre.

DarkSkies

Finally the sequel to Sierra's Quest for Glory series is out. It stays true to tradition of the previous QFG games and has a new 3D graphics engine in place taking the graphics to the next level. Unfortunately the game is too short and playing as a different class only offers limited replay value.

85 87 88 88 80 90

www.qg5.com

More

Quest for Glory V

Good Graphics  
Interactive Sound  
Stays True To Series

Too Short  
No Multiplayer For Now  
Bugs

OVERALL RATING

82





# RAILROAD TYCOON II

I can't say it's amazing that since we were kids we've all had a quirky fascination with choo-choos... err I mean trains (not all of us, Ed). The success of the first Railroad Tycoon was proof that even as adults we are still fascinated by the "Iron Horses". If you love trains, if you regard yourself as a financial whiz kid, if you love deep economic strategy games and if you're sick of all the "Clone and Conquer" games out there, then read on because this may just be the definitive game for you.

It boy! A train-set... well not really.

Firstly it's quite a thing straight railroad tycoon 2 is not a fair simulation. It is a real time economic strategy game. No shooting and no killing. Yes you have to win out your competition by you will do this by out manoeuvring him in the business world (although modelling no men would have been fun for that's as me). Although Railroad Tycoon 2 involves trains it does so only to the extent that in this business simulation your business is the railroad business and therefore you will have to know everything there is to know about trains, railroads, stations and all the various types of cargo you will transport. Fortunately there is a 128 page manual, which does a rather nice job of explaining all the intricacies of the game to you, and believe me this game has many, as you'll soon find out.

The game opens up with a video showing the development of the railroad business. Throughout the game you will hear various blues soundtracks which match the game perfectly. In fact the music tracks are excellent

## Railroad Strategy

MIN REQUIR'D NEEDED TO PLAY

Pentium 333 Mhz  
16 MB RAM  
4 X CDROM  
1024x768 SVGA Card  
130 Mb Hard Drive Space  
Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Developer Pop Top Software

Publisher God Games/Take 2

Supplier Multimedia Warehouse  
Tel (011) 315-1000  
R 299.00

www.godgames.com

and are the best I've ever heard in a game. The opening video and the music really get you in the mood of the pioneering days of the railroad barons. The interface looks very

metallic and full of pipes and is supposed to represent the industrial revolution. When you are in the single player multi-player or Editor, which is basically a map-editor. The single player is divided into a campaign of 18 different goal based scenarios consisting of various famous (or infamous) feats in railroad history or you can choose a map and play an open game. Although there is no random mission generator the various resources in this game are randomised every time you choose a map. There are two different ways to play the game. For those who want this game merely to build railroads and watch choo-choos moving around there is the "sandbox" mode. In this mode there is no financial competition and no playing the stock market. A "Sim Railroad" you, like.

For those who want a serious challenge there is the "real game". You are the chairman of a railroad. In any case your mission is simple: make money and make lots of it.

However there is a difficulty and that's all fair. It sounds like you see more of the railroad companies around with shrewd, conniving,

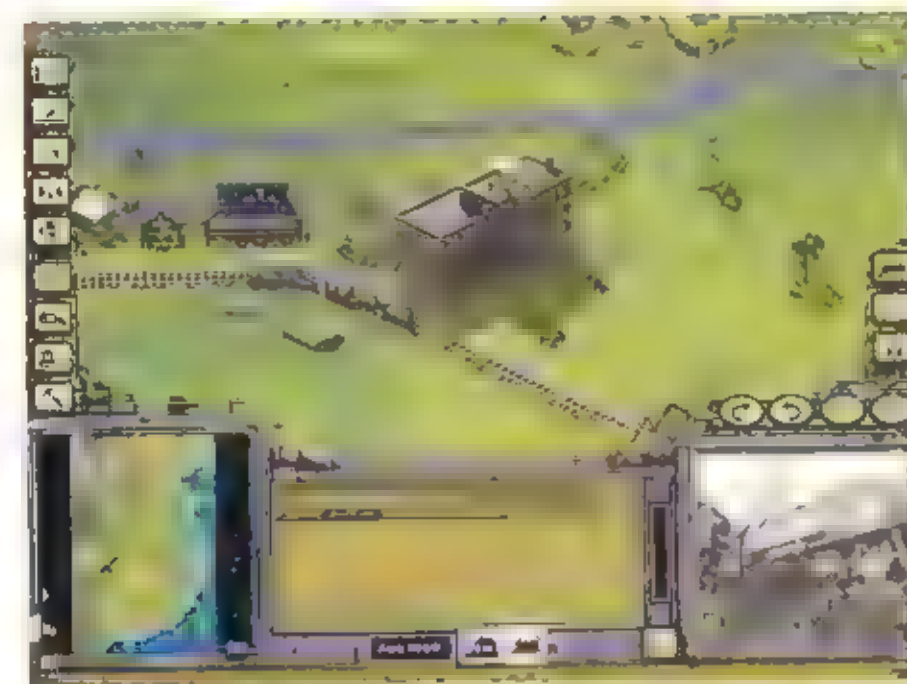


If only the South African economy could create these headlines



Where is a demolition expert when you need one?

(cont)



Virtual trainpotting has never been this much fun

bastard... err... other competitors and they are lean and mean. You will have to use every trick in the book, and then some which aren't in the book to succeed. Believe me this game is complex and satisfyingly deep. You will have to learn how the resources benefit each other, i.e. a station with a steel plant near it will demand coal and iron. Your job is to get these resources there as soon as possible. For a few of course. You will learn to play the stock market to sell in margin, to issue stock to buy bonds and when things get really bad to declare bankruptcy. The game is a real, easy to play if you have played other strategy games. You are presented with an isometric view of the map that you can rotate anyway and zoom in and out of. On this map there are all kinds of resources: towns, rivers, forests, hills and seas. Everything there

are various maps, which represent most of the world and you can even play right here in South Africa. While we're on the topic let me just say that the graphics are superb, especially when you zoom in. The attention to detail is amazing and I often found myself just watching the trains cruise around the countryside.



Trains, trains and more trains! There are numerous different trains modelled in the game from the old steam engines to the modern Diesel trains. You will have to buy trains wisely since each train has different characteristics. Lighter trains cannot pull too heavy loads whilst the big ugly slow trains can pull huge loads. Some are expensive to maintain others are just expensive to buy but cheaper to run. All these things will have to be considered. At the end of the day the game is about running a railroad company. This will not only entail laying tracks and buying trains but will also depend on how you

invest the money you make. Expect stock market crashes, recessions, strikes, train crashes and even robberies. You will be able to buy into other industries and even invest in your opponent's stock. So if he is doing really well in the game then the value of his stock goes up and you make money. Although that will not be enough you will have to manage carefully and shrewdly. Show no mercy and take advantage when the other guy blinks. The game has an excellent tutorial set of missions to help you along and the "un-lay" option is that pop-up every now and then. I find it a little easier to help you ease into the saddle.

Are there problems in the game? Well all games have bugs these days even an excellent game like Railroad Tycoon 2 suffers from some. However there is already a patch available to squash these. The other thing I don't like is the way you use your mouse to lay tracks. It is a little tricky and will take some time to get used to and in the beginning you will end up laying tracks where you did not really intend to. An "un-lay" option would've been useful. The game offers free multiplayer over HiAI Net but personally I do not think a game of this nature is suited to multi-player but at least it is offered in the package which is a good thing.

Railroad Tycoon 2 may be the best economic simulation strategy game in the genre and it is clear from the meticulous attention to detail that the design of this game was a labour of love. For those of you who are all locomotives you will go loco for this game.



Reaper

Railroad Tycoon 2 improves on almost every aspect of the previous game. It handles the accountancy side of the railway business with such finesse and all manages to make the game fun to play. Minor bugs and track design problems don't detract from the overall enjoyment.

90 92 85 80 92 90

www.godgames.com

TECHNICAL PLAYERS: 90/92/85/80/92/90  
Casualty: 10/10/10/10/10/10  
+ Excellent Economic Strategy  
+ Historically Accurate  
+ Cheap-Cheap!

OVERALL RATING







In the early 90's Microprose was the undisputed King of WWII combat simulations with its Pacific Air War title. However, recently the King had waned a little and the younger stronger crown princes such as Jane's Combat Simulations and Microsoft have attempted to usurp the old King. Now Microprose has given notice that the King was back and he was fighting fit! The long awaited successor to the excellent Pacific Air War has finally arrived and European Air War is ready to reclaim its place as WWII King!

Reaper

Ice box what's it got in it?

The box includes an excellent manual. This 258-page tome is a history, tactics, air combat

and game manual rolled into one. After much pink eventually found the keypad reference print-out number back of the manual. Installation was smooth and will need approximately 300 MB. On the CD you'll also find the Flight School which is approximately 60 pages of tactics and information, an excellent and welcome addition to the manual. The interface includes Quick Start, which is a pretty self explanatory action mode. Single Missions, Pilot Career which is the campaign mode, Configure Game, Multi-player, Newsfeed and view Objects.



are approximately twenty planes that you can fly, including variants of the Spitfire, the Hawker Hurricane, the Typhoon and the Tempest for the Brits. Variants of the P-51 Mustang, P-47 Thunderbolt and the P-18 Lightning for the Yanks and variants of the Bf-109, the Focke-Wulf 190, the Me-110 and the Me-262 jet for the Germans are also included. By choosing any of these you are taken to a screen that is particularly interesting. These hangars are amazingly well done. remember to look out for little special effects such as moving fans, smoking engines and aircraft flying by outside. From this screen you can configure the mission to your liking by choosing type of mission such as interdiction, escort or fighter sweeps, areas including any place in Western Europe and the unit

armament. Then onto 'fly' and away you go. You will fly into the most engrossing world in any WWII sim. From farm houses with little people sometimes running out if you target their home to huge bomber formations surrounded by anti-aircraft flak. It's all there. The game can have 256

## - WWII Flight Sim -

Min Required Recommended

Pentium 3.3 Mhz or better  
Pentium 166 Mhz or better  
32 MB RAM  
4 X CDROM  
Direct X comp. SVGA  
10 Mhz Hard Drive Space  
Win 95/98 100% or better

Microprose

Microprose

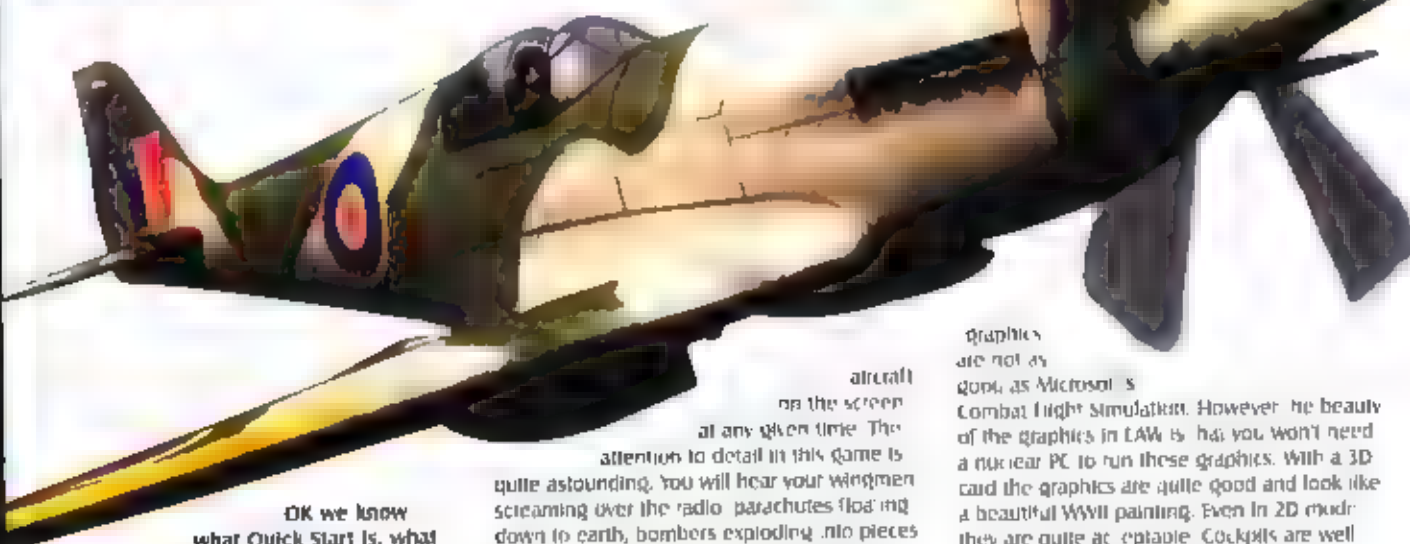
EA Africa  
Tel: (011) 803-1212  
R 299.00

www.microprose.com

So what did things look like in WWII?

The graphics in EAW are very well done and depict all the details. However the special effects graphics are nowhere near as good as those in Jane's Fighter Legends and the terrain

# EUROPEAN AIR WAR



aircraft

on the screen

at any given time. The

attention to detail in this game is

quite astounding. You will hear your wingmen screaming over the radio, parachutes floating down to earth, bombers exploding, no pieces and other bombers, gunners firing away at fighters. You will feel as if you're there. In fact this sim is the closest thing to a time machine have ever experienced.

graphics are not as good as Microsoft's Combat Flight Simulation. However the beauty of the graphics in EAW is that you won't need a nuclear PC to run these graphics. With a 3D card the graphics are quite good and look like a beautiful WWII painting. Even in 2D mode they are quite acceptable. Cockpits are well rendered but again the cockpit art cannot compare to the cockpits in Jane's Fighter Legends and Microsoft's Combat Flight Simulation. There are some special effects

(cont)



An airborne bird blender



This defies all the laws of physics

such as shell casings falling from wings when firing your guns. Little people are visible on the ground on occasion. contrails appear in the sky and flak is something to behold. Explosions are well done albeit not spectacular. Red-outs and blackouts are modelled as well so watch those high G moves. All in all the graphics in EAW are very good but not up to par with some of the recent releases. Unlike some of the other

WWII sims you have the ability to communicate with your wingman. Squadron or ground controller in fact the radio chatter is amazing and doesn't stop. You can order your wingman to do a variety of things such as provide cover for you, attack ground targets, go home and many other things. Of course depending on which country you're flying for you will hear British, Scottish and American accents. The Germans speak German but luckily Microprose included subtitles for the non-German amongst us.

**NAG Quote -**  
"Hitler built a fortress around Europe, but he forgot to put a roof on it."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

The Pilot Career is the campaign mode of EAW and it is in this mode that EAW snags the competition out of the park. You can choose Battle of Britain, Battle over Europe 1941 or 1944. You can fly for the British, Americans or the Germans. The campaigns



are modelled to authentic historical realities. So the Germans will never win the War no matter how many planes you manage to shoot down for them. The brilliant thing about the campaigns is that they are both dynamic and therefore you will never fly the same mission twice. Unfortunately although dynamic and not scripted, the campaign tends to spit out the same type of mission all the time. So if you're flying for the Brits in the Battle of Britain expect to fly intercept mission all the time. Although this is historically correct it can tend to get a little repet-

tive. The game models pilot fatigue amongst the pilots and once you get bored you can even put in for leave and get a weekend pass. Flight models are very realistic and expect to be stalling quite a bit and listen for the creaking of your airframe for warning of such stalls.

Authentic black and white newsreels with commentary are provided of famous air battles and aircraft of WWII and these are extremely informative and complement the manual and Flight School very well. There is also the object view, which enables you to study all the approximately 40 aircraft found in the sim. This is really a virtual history lesson.

So much to say so little space!

I haven't even begun to scratch the surface of this the deepest and most immersing WWII experience to ever grace the PC. I would need the entire magazine to put you in the full picture (but the editor said NO). There is multiplayer support, a variety of views and much more... and then some more. This is the definitive WWII sim out at the moment. In summary let me say this. If you are a WWII air combat fan or just an air combat fan then put the magazine down now and go buy this sim!

Reaper

It's totally absorbing. World War II simulation only just begins to describe the combination of all the elements this title brings together. With so many small touches, accurate flight models and aircraft you can fly in this game you don't need to look at anything else.

86

92

88

90

93

91

www.microprose.com

TOP 100 Personal  
WARGAME 88 Playing  
Modern 12 Players  
Serial 12 Players

Fighter Legends  
Used User 8 Fighters

Excellent Sounding Game  
Many Levels  
Many Flyable Aircraft  
Average 3D Graphics  
Solid Flight Model

OVERALL  
RATING

90





Are you afraid of the dark? Does the idea that someone could be outside, sneaking past your window in the dead of night fill you with dread? Or perhaps you are the kind of person that revels in the idea of creeping around at night, peering in on the unsuspecting, enjoying the solitude and the secrecy and freedom. Whatever your fancy, here is a game that I'd like you to take a look at. Follow me... if you dare.

**T**hief: The Dark Project, is a masterpiece in concept and execution. A game that will keep you immersed in a world of shadows, murder and intrigue. In Thief you will have the opportunity to sneak up behind an innocent bystander, perhaps you will choose to run him through with your sword - or maybe you will decide to spare his life and merely relieve him of some of his hard earned cash. The life of a thief is a lonely one, however, you will have to share the world of sun and laughter and grief on a cloak of darkness, silence and conspiracy in order to succeed. In one sense Thief is an action game. You are armed with some pretty interesting weapons including a sword, coss, and bow plus a variety of weird and wonderful items. But as a thief, you are not designed to rush around



an individual named Garrett who has decided to embark on an independent career in thievery. The world of Thief is a rich blend of the medieval alongside prime the looking technology. The society where Garrett lives is controlled by three competing brotherhoods: the Hammerites, the Keepers and the Tricksters. The Hammerites, crave law and order and are the self-appointed rulers in this world, they are also the holders of all modern technology. The Tricksters are the opposite, enjoying chaos, trying to create as much of it as they can. It is the Keepers who provide the balance between these two conflicting and extreme cults, ensuring that neither side gains too much power.

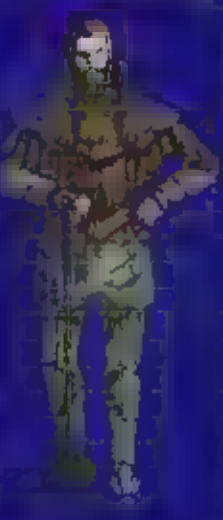
# THIEF

## THE DARK PROJECT

Looking Glass Studios, creators of such classic titles as High Impact (1 and 2), the Ultima Underworld series, and the all time great System Shock, recently released the sixth best game of all time by PC Gamer. The game is based on the life of



Garrett, who was once a member of the Keepers. Why he left the order to pursue darker affairs, is not clear at the outset, however. Now he is a master thief who makes his living stealing items on request for other people. The first mission in the game involves you guiding Garrett through a burglary where you have to steal a silver sceptre from a Lord Bancroft. This is a fairly simple mission and all you will need to do is sneak around a mansion ensuring no one catches you in the act - or just bash them on the head if they do. Each mission becomes more difficult as the game progresses and may require more than one puzzle to be solved. There are three levels of difficulty, each



### 1st Person Action

Min Required	Recommended
Processor: 386 486 or better Pentium 200 mhz (recommended) 32 MB RAM 4 X CDROM 4 MB SVGA display 80 MB Hard Drive Space Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)	Processor: 500 mhz 64 MB RAM 8 X CDROM 32 MB VRAM 120 MB Hard Drive Space Win 95/98 (DirectX 6)

Looking Glass Tech.

Eidos Interactive

EA Africa  
Tel: (011) 803-1212  
R 299.00

www.eidosinteractive.com

With more objectives and obstacles added. On Normal difficulty you may only have to find an object plus some gold for the mission to end, while at harder levels you might have to locate a person and complete the entire mission without killing anyone, a feat I found almost impossible. The story becomes more mysterious and Garrett's talent in obtaining even the most well guarded objects attracts the interest of a mysterious benefactor who wants him to recover a mystical artefact. It is at this point that you begin to discover how Garrett has been manipulated and that a lot more than gold and jewels will rely on how you play the rest of the game.

Playing Thief is quite different from any first person shooter you will have seen. You can't simply walk about picking up gold - instead you will need to keep to the shadows and avoid making a noise. How do you achieve that, you might ask? Well the levels have been designed in such a way that light

and dark areas are clearly defined. Although Thief is a game that is meant to be played in the shadows, it is anything but dull or gloomy. The developers have created a world that is filled with colour and light, where rags and tapestries glow in the torchlight, but that is not your world. Instead you will have to watch from the shadows ever playing the silent observer. When you creep through a room while a guard eats his meal, you will certainly feel the tension when you come to an exposed area that you need to cross - can you make it with out him seeing or hearing you? The designers have done an excellent job

## Thief: The Dark Project (cont)

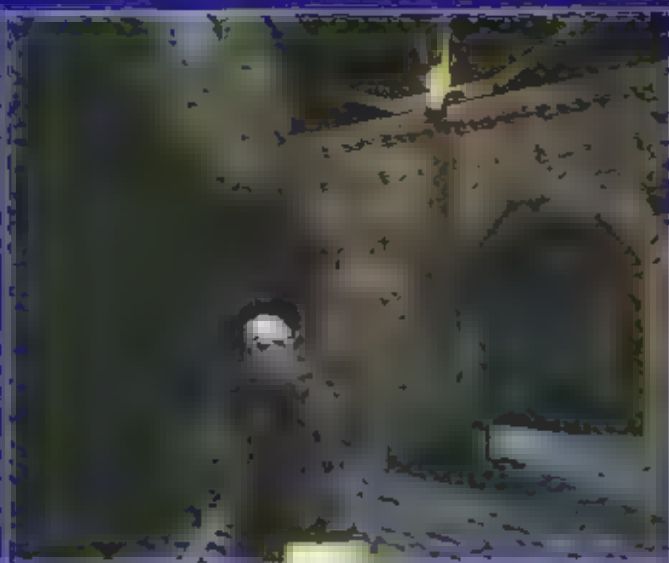
of creating the essential mood in everything you do. Sound, or rather silence is critical to your survival. That's not to say that this is a quiet game. On the contrary, guards gossip amongst themselves and will discuss the rumour that a thief was seen or a suspicious sound was heard in the kitchen. You should pay attention to what they say, as you might overhear them talk about the location of some treasure or key. While you can hear, you can also be heard so be careful of how much noise you make. Different surfaces make different sounds - and wood is fine if you move slowly but stone and metal grating can be very loud. If you make too much noise you'll attract guards who will all join in the search for you. An indicator in the form of a jewel at the bottom of the screen centre brightens or darkens depending on how visible or noisy you are. If the alarm is sounded my best advice is run like hell. You are a thief not a barbarian, and while you might stand a chance in a one on one fight, if you have the advantage of surprise, you are dead meat if two or more guards find you.

Your choice of weapons is quite good but you don't carry enough arrows around for you to try and kill everyone you see. A far better

plot is to sneak up behind the guard where you might be able to knock him out with a blow from your blackjack. Your bow works well at medium distances where you should shoot from the shadows, making sure that you have a good target otherwise the missed shot will attract guards. The action of the bow is very realistic. At full stretch the view zooms in for accurate aiming once you have the target locked. You must hold that tension for too long and after a few seconds your aim will waiver and you'll be forced to lower the bow. Remember that arrows have a parabolic trajectory, so you'll have to compensate for this on long shots. In addition to a regular broad-head arrow there are also wick arrows for dowsing torches and clearing blood that might attract a guard's attention. The wick arrow is also used with holy water to kill undead creatures. The mace arrow will create a diversion while the rope arrow can be used to create a real ladder when shot into wood. The fire arrow is not often available but is very useful for killing really difficult customers. The moss arrow is used to muffle noise over difficult surfaces while the gas arrow will render anyone in



A little back stabbing never hurt anyone.



Who goes there?

the area unconscious. There are other items in your inventory, such as lock picks, flash bombs, and mines. Timing is everything however, and you will find that the cash is usually good enough to settle most problems.

Hardware requirements are reasonable and I found that the game plays well on my AMD 233. While a 3D card is not necessary it is recommended. Although the graphics are good they are not in the league of Half-Life or Unreal, that said, they do suit the mood and character of the game. Character animation is very good - far better than in most other first person shooters - with the possible exception of Half-Life. Multiplayer is not an option in Thief, which I thought was a good thing as the game and story is far stronger without.

Thief has a very rich story and you will find yourself becoming quickly drawn in to this complex and intriguing world. This is a great game for those who enjoy a more cerebral gaming experience while those of you that enjoy adventure games should become sold on the unique and interactive environment. What ever your preference one thing is clear, Looking Glass Studios have really produced a cutting edge product that is original in concept and immensely playable.

It's not often you come across a game that does it so different. Thief is a more intelligent game and doesn't rely on action to make its point. Its compelling story and intelligent characters puts it a cut above.



www.eidosinteractive.com

Unreal 2  
+ Excellent AI  
+ Brutal Combat  
+ Enthralling Gameplay

Unreal 2  
+ Excellent AI  
+ Brutal Combat  
+ Enthralling Gameplay

OVERALL  
RATING







Who can forget that classic game Asteroids? I bet many of you remember the game from the Atari 2600 days. Some of you may have even forked out those hard earned 20p pieces for the arcade version when you were younger. Back in those days Asteroids was a best seller and became a classic among gamers, just how would it fare in today's highly competitive market is another question. **DarkBlade**

Recently you must have noticed the Asteroids box on the shelves at local computer retailers. Yes you guessed it... the classic from 1979 is back, featuring those graphics, a host of outstanding features and dare I say it... a new twist.

Asteroids is set in the known universe where mining has moved into space due to the depleted natural resources of planet Earth. There is one problem - all the richest mineral deposits are located in Asteroid fields. Seeing this as an opportunity the Astro-Mining Corporation hires civilian pilots to blast the Asteroids to manageable chunks, which can then be mined. This effort supports entire off-planet societies and there is only one rule - make the company rich and it makes sense to do so.

Arcade Action	
Min Required	Recommended
Processor 48 Mhz 16 MB RAM 4 X CDROM 2MB SVGA PCI Display 70 Mhz Hard Drive Space Win 95/98 DirectX 6.1	Processor 133 Mhz 32 MB RAM 8 X CDROM Direct 3D Comp. Accel. 70 Mhz Hard Drive Space Win 95/98 DirectX 6.1
Developer: Sierra Development	
Publisher: Activision	
Supplier: Multimedia Warehouse	
Tel: (011) 315-1000	
Fax: 10293 00	
International Web Site www.activision.com	

## ASTEROIDS

If you don't dispose of the blown off fragmented pieces quickly.

To aid you in your clearing endeavour the mining corporation drops experimental weapons every now and again in the form of power-ups. These weapons are limited so caution should be exercised when using them. My favourite has to be the Missile Armageddon power-up, which throws your ship into a lightning fast 360-degree spin while firing plasma missiles in every direction. It is a spectacle to behold and comes in handy, especially when you find yourself in a tight spot.

The most notable graphics engine, which utilises 3D hardware acceleration. Special effects such as translucent asteroids, flaming fireballs and black holes are evident to name but a few.

The one disappointment would be the weapon sounds. They are unconvincing and require a little more 'oomph' to them.

They sound similar to that of an action arcade game of the late 80's. Instead of the high quality sound we have come to expect from games nowadays.

Asteroids is an improved blast from the past with better graphics

and gameplay. It doesn't offer anything in the form of depth and is just fun to play. If you're lucky you might even find the classic arcade version which is hidden within the game. Asteroids is definitely only for the die hard arcade game player and perhaps anyone looking to relive the past glory of Asteroids. Most other gamers will find this little offering limited fun and will tire of it in a couple of hours.

shaped ship from the classic as well as 3 new ships, which look a little more futuristic in nature. Each one has its own pros and cons, one might turn faster at the cost of acceleration and another has more powerful shields at the cost of firepower.

### A blast from the past

The new and improved Asteroids allows you to fight your way through five different zones each comprising of fifteen levels. The object is to clear each level of all asteroids while killing any aliens that pop up as well. Unlike the classic version there are eight different types of asteroids and each one has unique features. They range from the classic asteroid that splits up into multiple pieces to Crystal Asteroids which grow back to full size.



More like a rare jewel than an asteroid.

Of course these freelance Asteroid-busters also realised that they could offer a clearance service to the military, helping them wage their battles against hostile forces. This explains why clearing asteroid belts has become so dangerous with hostile aliens popping up, ready to take a chunk out of your ship. Not the most innovative story, but I guess something is better than nothing considering this is an action game - the emphasis being on action. When gallivanting through these dangerous areas one must have a ship, and there are 3 to choose from. There is the triangular triangle.

Reviews from the past come back to life. The new Asteroids features improved graphics and extended gameplay. New ships, types of asteroids and weapons make this an interesting game. Unfortunately shooting asteroids for hours on end isn't becoming all that fun.

83	75	85	70	75	85
www.activision.com					
Multitasking - Only 2 Players	Classic Asteroids	Relictive Asteroids	Extended Story	Good Graphics	Source Power Converter

OVERALL RATING

79



## Space Shooter

Psygnosis

Publisher: Psygnosis

Supplier: Ster Kinekor Inter  
Tel: (011) 445-7900  
RRP: R 459.00

International Web Site  
www.odt-game.com

It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.

A magical green planet is the only one to be using the magic of the stars. It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.

deep in the Forbidden Zone on top of a dark and forbidding tower. It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.

There is something about the game to be had here which makes all the little problems even more amusing. The game is a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.

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enemies you can never seem to hit. If you do get back and over look the game and the game engine problems then this title might provide a good solid challenge.

It could have been a little game if it wasn't for the few critical problems. Wait for the inevitable sequel and then have another look.



## Sports Simulation

Developer: Canal Multimedia

Canal Multimedia

Ster Kinekor Inter  
Tel: (011) 445-7900  
R 459.00

www.playstation-europe.com

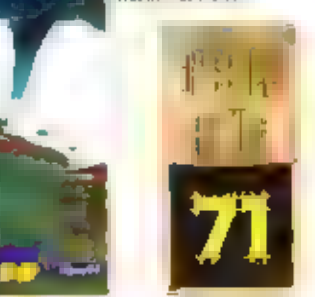
## RUSHDOWN

Rushdown is basically like Goal Keeper minus the tedious back moves and pace plus a minimum like an arcade game. There is an arcade mode for public thrills and a championship mode to give you a challenge. It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.



It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars. It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.

On a more positive note the game does have three different levels of racing modes, which provides a little more depth to the game. The game is a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.



## Boxing Simulation

JVC

JVC

Ster Kinekor Inter  
Tel: (011) 445-7900  
R 479.00

International Web Site  
www.jvc.com

ing to the release of Victory Boxing 2, there was only one other boxing game available for the PlayStation and that was Victory Boxing 1. It was a long time since we had a boxing game.



even up for the thinking man that helped to create the game. It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars. It's a little bit of a shame that the people at ODT are not the only ones to be using the only hope is to use the magic of the stars.





RULE 76b

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Formula One '98 Rules. OFFICIAL.











The adrenaline inducing action is matched only by the pressurised build-up that comes from running out of shields while flying by the seat of your pants. A space fighter's dream come true.

Just over a year ago, two epic space combat games were released, just in time to be on everyone's Christmas list. Fans of Star Wars style dog fighting had a reason to celebrate, as Psygnosis announced that two futuristic shooters namely G-Police and Colony Wars were going to be unleashed onto the PlayStation. Seeing as there were no respectable space shooters available at that time, gamers yearning for this kind of gameplay were treated to two exceptionally stunning titles. After waiting so long for a space shooter, gamers were suddenly presented with a double whammy as a result of this both games

suffered from the same problem. The result of which was that Colony Wars became the sleeper title, while G-Police took all the limelight.

It seems as though Psygnosis are not planning a repeat performance of last years misadventure as they now have the release of Colony Wars: Vengeance and a future release of G-Police 2. This should mean that the sequel to the underdog Colony Wars will now receive the praise and recognition that passed over the original.

Vengeance is an epic sequel to what was an already big game in the first installment.

Space Shooter	
Developer	Psygnosis
Publisher	Psygnosis
Supplier	Ster Kinekor Inter.
	Tel: (011) 445-7900
RRP	R 399.00
International Web Site www.colonywars.com	

matic saga are two pilots who go by the names of Beck's and Klein. Both have lost parents in their childhood, thus giving them the motivation to join the rebellion and vengeance on their oppressor. These rich themes are woven into the story unfolds. It's a dark and murky journey where hidden agendas and immoral decisions are often played out. We view the unfolding story line and play the game as the fighter pilot Merlon. He is the link between the different paths the plot can take. In total there are six individual endings that can be reached. Depending on how you perform in the forty plus missions decides

whether the story takes the variations and turns that all can

we were introduced to the two warring factions, the League and the Navy. After beating the Navy and sealing them into a starving solar system at the end of Colony Wars, we saw the Navy 100 years on, with civil war and major unrest finally behind them.

Against their original enemies, the League, things get complicated as Klein, the man who allies and leads the Navy, is betrayed by the League, hence the name Vengeance. The other characters involved in this time

veyed through twenty-six stunning FMV sequences. The quality presentation and mature themes associated with it lends the game a definite cinematic feel.

At the beginning of each mission you are given a briefing that includes a detailed

## Colony Wars - Vengeance (cont)



This beats hot air ballooning anyday

description of the required goals and reasons for obtaining them. The diversity in objectives makes for some highly original sorties. Don't think that this is your usual escort and point-to-point situation, sure there are these elements, but there is a whole lot more on offer as well. Try eliminating asteroids, destroying gun turrets, or downloading a computer virus into an enemy's satellite. On top of the myriad of space missions are land based sorties over barren landscapes targeting ground based gun turrets so that you are able to get out the objectives while keeping a weary eye on your radar for possible air attacks. And that's not all as you even get to fight with some deadly Boss type enemies. Sometimes it can be a little confusing to work out what is required, as ensuring that you stay in one piece long enough to find the correct method of pro-



experience. Long periods of play often result in a thrown controller or some shouted words of abuse, as sometimes it almost seems as though the game's designers are deliberately stacking minute obstacles. On the other hand it does provide for lots of re-play, and

ceding, is a task in itself. It has to be said that the overall difficulty in securing all the objectives, plus the often-omitted time you are given is incredibly hard. So hard that it takes days to work through certain missions if anything. Colony Wars is so tough that it almost becomes an increasingly frustrating

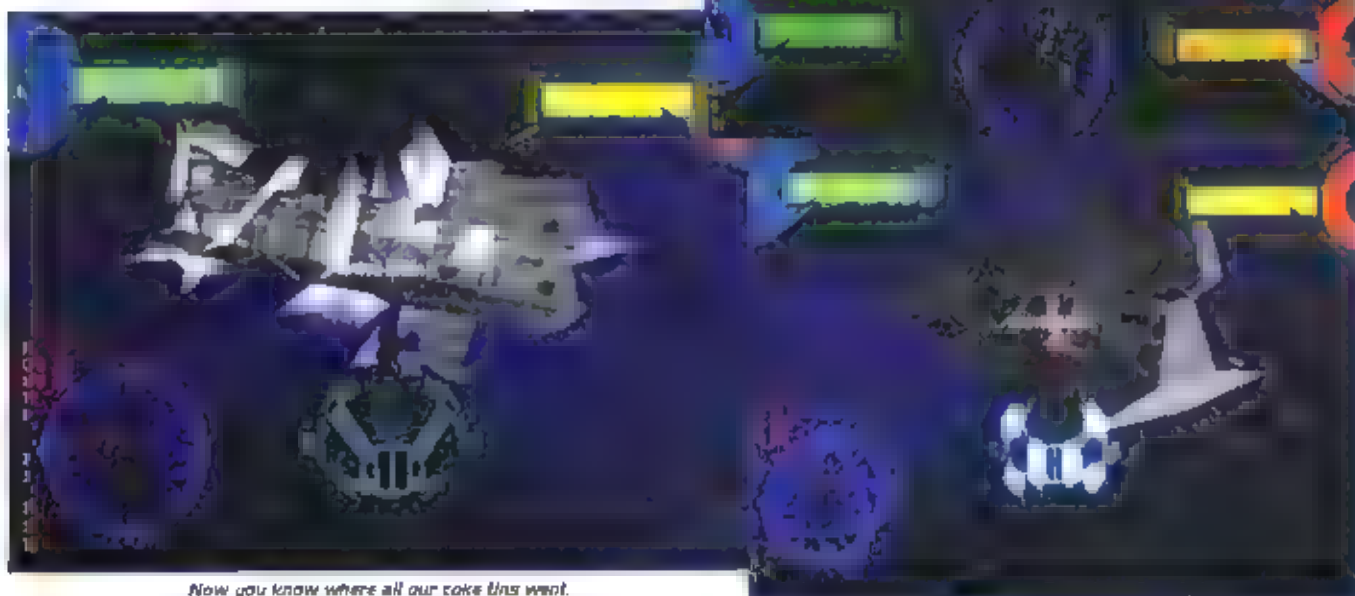
insults a certain sense of satisfaction when you overcome the impossible. My only other hope is that the save feature should be a lot more sympathetic. After a mission you might not be given the opportunity to save. This can be criminal after you have just spent all night getting that far.

But these criticisms should in no way give you the impression that the game is not worth the asking price. It is easily one of the best looking space shooters to grace the PlayStation. Of all the best with space ships designed like mechs, planet based environments, and awesome lighting effects to name but a few. It really is an impressive display of what this genre can look like. The amount of options available is also worth mentioning, twenty-one different weapons, plus the ability to earn better craft. Once sorties are completed successfully you are awarded tokens, that are used to upgrade your fighter. It is possible to assign four attributes such as shield strength and maneuverability to your craft. The level of enemies it is hard to say the least, but thank

fully your wingman, (Beck's or Klein) does a reasonable job of helping you out, rather than just acting as window dressing. The control and flight physics are spot on, once you will have to persevere in order to become a competent pilot. As with any deeper flight game, initially seems a little overwhelming but a little practice with the thrusters and capabilities will produce an amazingly agile ship. And when you're in the middle of a hectic dogfight with enemy ships attacking you from all sides, believe me you will need to be able to pull a few maneuvers.

This is a shining example of a well-produced game. You have all the vital elements such as creative design, dramatic story line, in-depth gameplay and of course, an important feeling of actually being there. Do yourself a favor and find out what the PlayStation is really capable of.

LH Industries



Now you know where all our coke has went.

Colony Wars: Vengeance is the best space shooter available for the PSX. Combining an epic story and action packed non-linear mission, CMW plays as good as it looks. It's deep gameplay and over 40 levels, as well as six different endings, will provide a challenge for even the most hardcore gamers.

98 98 94 90 86 85

www.colonywars.com

1 Player 1 Block

Intense Action  
Involving Story Line  
Stunning Presentation

Frustratingly Hard  
Impassable Levels

OVERALL RATING

89





Playing Brian Lara Cricket brought back memories of the days of padding up with every conceivable piece of protection available before entering the firing line of a round hard object that is strategically positioned to hit you square in the head. As fate would have it, I would normally protect myself with this solid wooden bat given to me and somehow survive to face the next onslaught. To be totally honest it's a lot less stressful sitting behind this monitor.

Storm

Since the inception of the PlayStation cricket has been the one sport sorely neglected by the console because of the demand for other crowd pulling sports titles. The fact that the bulk of games are developed in the Americas and Asia gives nobody just cause to develop a true cricket simulation for the more civilised nations (that bring the Commonwealth of course). As ever, Codemasters spotted the gap in the market and with their normal brilliance have brought out the best cricket simulation available on any gaming platform.

Brian Lara the West Indies cricket captain lends his record-breaking name to one of the few cricket titles ever released. With no competition to compare themselves to, Codemasters have taken what was given.

## BRIAN LARA CRICKET™

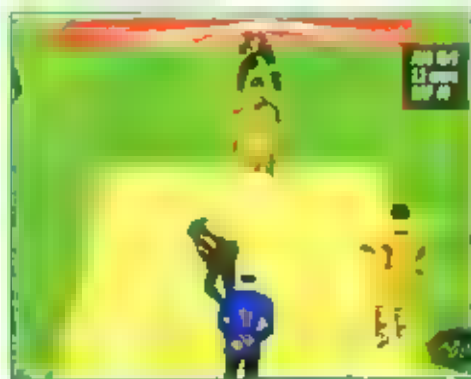


Who put this screenshot here?

Sport Simulation	
Developer:	Codemasters
Publisher:	Codemasters
Supplier:	Ster Kinekor Inter.
RRP:	Tel: (011) 445-7500 R 459.00
International Web Site www.codemaster.com	

and playing it for a while it came to me why I really hadn't enjoy playing it in the first place. It used unknown players and mostly BIC hasn't suffered the same fate and actually impressed me with its up to date database of the top test playing nations, each with detailed stats and character features of all the current players. This definitely helped simulate the intense battles that had me wiping the sweat from underneath my helmet as I tried to steer Hansie's men to yet another win. It was especially handy since I could actually play with an almost exact replica team that is currently challenging the West Indies. The only player incorrectly represented is Davi Richardson who has since joined.

With the overwhelming selection of team names to choose from you can rest assured you will have many a second innings with BIC.



Whether you are looking to just slog a few quick overs against an opponent or play a full 5 day test series against England all orders you can. And let's not forget the reason why cricket is so popular the one day international World Cup. All the cricketing nations are available to fight it out to the end, each with their own stats and performance ratings. An interesting rating sets South Africa top of the batting class but has as an average bowling team. Guess Codemasters haven't watched the stats lately (go Kalis) knockout.

Competitions. T20s, Test Series, World Series, Tournaments and Day & Night Internationals are all backed up by weather conditions, varying pitch and outfield conditions. A large array of field placing is available with one gripe coming from the lack of customisable field placings, leaving little room for personalised settings. However the large selection available will normally fill in the gaps.

Cricket is a difficult sport to simulate and turned it into a gamers dream. The motion capture technology and the graphical talents of Codemasters bring BIC to life with realistic animation almost as if watching the action from the stands. Unfortunately the eye candy features are let down by a few clipping and crash detection problems but nothing that actually detracts heavily from the performance.

A few weeks back I stole my version of Cricket 97 back from a very annoyed spider that protects all my old game classics. After loading it onto my machine

## Brian Lara Cricket

(cont.)



This is a little like deji vu for the West Indies



The Para-eye misses nothing least of all Jonty's running between the wickets

needed.

You are looking for a game that has as many shots as Darryl Cullinan when on form of course then listen to this healthy arsenal: Square drive, square cut, leg glance, hook, sweep, on-drive, straight drive and defensive (not something Pat Symcox would practice often). The control mechanism requires an ever increasing amount of timing depending on the difficulty level. Most of the shots can be played without spraining the thumb joints and are well positioned for maximising control.

Bowling is easily learnt and offers a fair amount of options depending on the class of bowler. Whether you are a leg spinner, fast, swing off spinner, left arm slow left chinamen or ambidextrous, you can vary the speed and positioning of the delivery. As the difficulty level gets harder you are left with a shorter amount of time in position and execute your delivery. This adds an element of skill and luck to the game as with the real deal.

Sounds and commentary are generously spread as Geoff Boycott and Jonathan Agnew supply us with their special brand of uninspiring comments. As with most sports titles repetitive commentary just irritates most of the time but then how much is there to say about cricket (Robin Jackman might have something to say about that though). Real crowd chants and cheering do salvage some of the glide and are welcome especially towards the end of the tight matches when things start getting a little hairy and the cheering turns an octave or two.



The most disappointing factor of BIC is the fielding, which is offset by the difficult camera angles and colour related problems. No matter what angle you choose it almost impossible to compete on higher levels, especially when fielding is against a batting side like Sri Lanka. There is also the contrast problem that makes it difficult to pick up the direction of the ball off the bat and normally results in one or two extra runs against you. Because of this I was forced to play with the computer fielding for most of the time but with the return throws coming in over the stumps time and again, who would want to change especially when you have ample chances of runouts and third umpire decisions.

If it's cricket you want then it's Brian Lara Cricket you must get. The small bugs and glitches are hidden beneath an extremely entertaining sport simulation. There are no recent comparisons to compare BIC to, but even then this would most probably not perform any less. If you leave this one out you are sure to be stumped and given the red light. As for Brian Lara Cricket, it is going to occupy the crease for quite a while or at least until EA's Cricket 99 arrives, but that's a long way off.

Storm

An intensely satisfying reward from Codemasters to capture the true detail and realism of the sport of cricket. The use of motion capture and real life players makes you deep into this world of big before wickets. With Codemasters and in first to last, the using in take a great effort to head them out.

77 84 89 NA 93 91

www.codemasters.com

12 Players 17 Blocks

Real Life Players  
Realistic Cricket  
Interactive Gameplay

Amazing Graphics  
Amazing Camera Angles

OVERALL RATING

87



Fans of almost every sport have been catered for on the Playstation, being treated to a plethora of both licensed and unlicensed titles from every sporting genre in existence with only one or two exceptions. One of these exceptions is boxing. Although there have been previous attempts at recreating the sport on the Playstation (JVC's Victory Boxing Series) they have failed miserably. EA Sports looks to set things right in the boxing genre with Knockout Kings 98 and it definitely succeeds.

I started up KK for the first time with great expectations and I wasn't disappointed. After watching the opening video KK gives you the option of 3 different modes of play: Sluggfest, Exhibition & Career as well as the mandatory options section. Whilst at first Knockout Kings may seem a bit bare with only 3 different modes of play you soon realise that everything EA Sports could possibly incorporate into the game is present.

in the slugfest mode you can choose one of 18 real life boxes, one of the generic boxes, or one you created in the career mode and battle it out in a fight of up to 3 rounds with absolutely no rules. I must say that out of all of the game modes, this one must be the easiest because of the fact that there are no rules. All it takes is a few low blows or kidney punches and your opponent is out. It's a bit of a shame since slugfest mode has great potential and the option to turn the difficulty up a notch would've been a welcome addition.

The exhibition mode is pretty much self-explanatory. Pick one of the 36 boxes (from a heavy, middle or lightweight competitor and fight it out against an opponent of the same weight class. The referee for all exhibition fights is the legendary Mills Lane and you can slug it out in one of 4 available arenas including the Grand Casinos Arena & the Great Western Forum among others. Low blows, kidney punches and head-butts are all illegal and if the referee sees you, you will first get a few warnings, then a point deducted and if you're a real dirty competitor you will be disqualified. The referee is only visible at the start of the fight where he explains the rules. He is present during the fight but only appears in a small box in the corner of the screen when an infringement occurs.

### Swollen and bloody

When you go into Career mode you have the option of either loading a boxer from your memory card or creating a new one. You go to a tune your boxer's weight class, height, weight and look before taking him into battle. You start at the bottom of the ladder and have to fight your way through around 20 generic fighters with stupid names before you face the champion. In between fights you have the option of training with either the speed bag or the heavy bag to increase your speed, power and stamina attributes. Unlike *NVC's* Victory Boxing 2 there are no new, unrealistic moves to learn - what



### Boxing Simulation

**Developer:** Electronic Arts

**Publisher:** Electronic Arts

**Supplier:** EA Africa  
**Tel:** (011) 803-1212  
**RRP:** R 399.00

**Local Web Site**  
**WWW.GA.GOV**

the harder, the better, he arenas you fight in, for example, when you are in the top 5 you fight in Caesar's Palace. Essentially, when you fight the champion (who isn't a generic fighter, it's either a randomly chosen real boxer) you fight in none other than Madison Square Garden with Mills late as referee and Jimmy Lennon Jr. as the ring announcer. After winning the championship you win the game by defending your belt against around 5 former champions before you can retire. Boy.

Commentary is provided throughout the game by the duo of Al Albert & Sean 'O'Grady. There is nothing special about the commen-

Why it's exactly just "the charm" caught the challenger with a jab and a kind of stuff! If you choose to play in the exhibition mode, the commentators will give a brief description of each fighter in the beginning of the match but that's it. There is much else in the way of sound, just deadish lowed cheers and the sound of punches landing.

Graphically KK is very impressive and knocks the likes of Victory Boxing 2 out for his count - the characters are smooth, seamless and believable looking exactly like their real life counterparts. The arenas look stunning but unfortunately the crowd is just a blend of colours that is nowhere near realistic. The fighters are detailed and a nice touch is that if you work on a certain part of your opponent's head it becomes swollen and

bloody. For instance, if you are working the right eye of your opponent it will swell but won't affect the rest of his face. Most of the browers, trunks are the same as their real life counterparts, one such example being Butterbear's trunks with the American flag on them.

The control is excellent and it doesn't feel

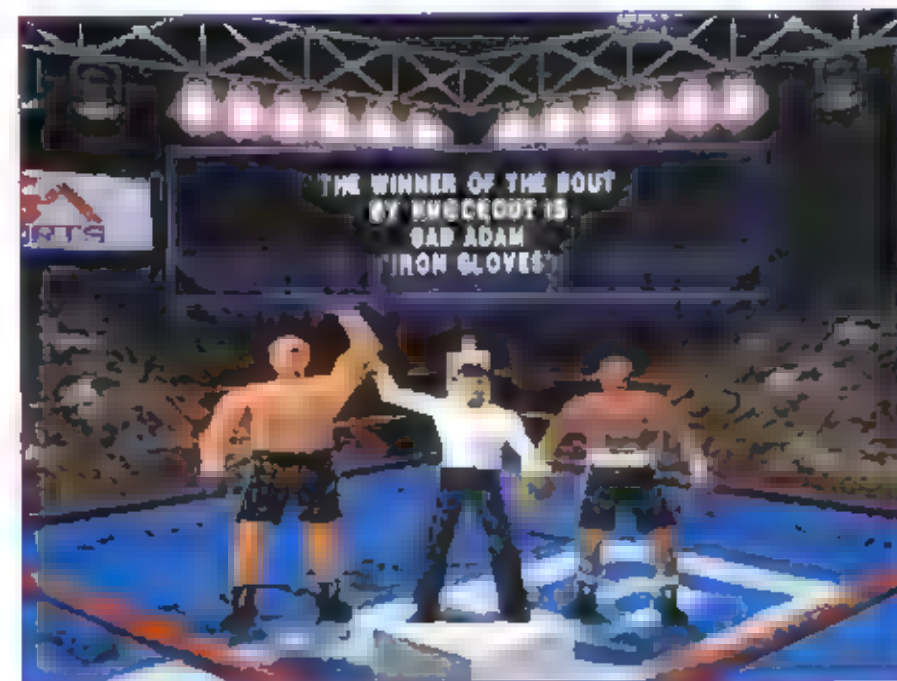


### **Gentlemen start your engines**

you begin with is all you have – but, however, isn't a problem due to the wide array of moves available. For a right-handed boxer you have a left jab (hook when in close), right cross (hook when in close) and an uppercut. You can also perform illegal moves by holding the L1 button and lunging punches/combos by holding the R2 button. The higher you are on

## Knockout Kings

(cont)



Esas, which is the under-arm when you need it.

as the light here could have been used  
to find a spot that was not used to spot a  
bullet and the spot (bullet) after the  
light was not used to spot a bullet  
and if the light was used to spot a bullet

[illegible]

### An out of body experience

[illegible]

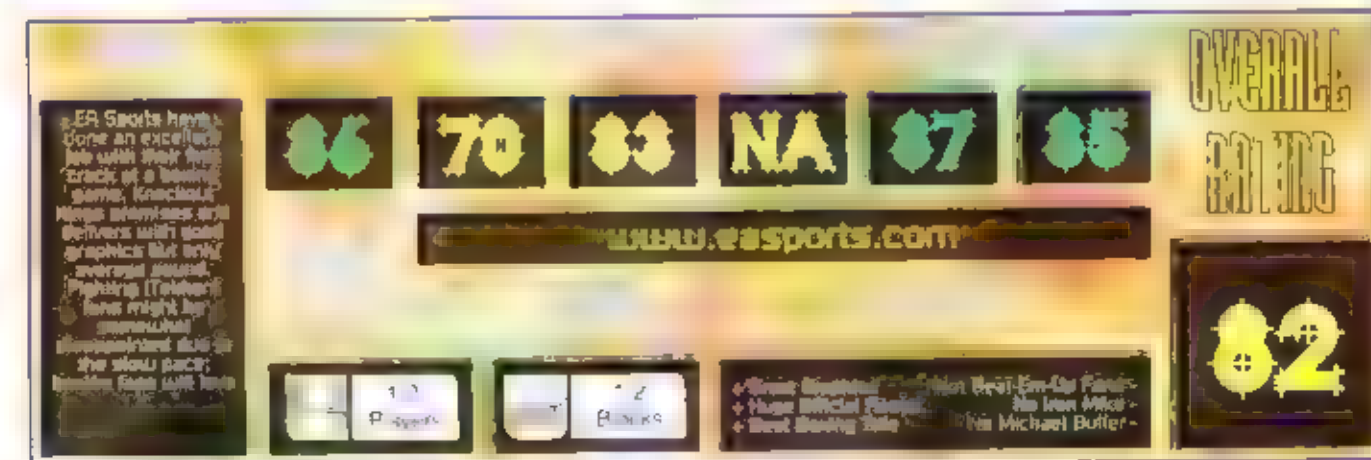
even be disqualified just like Exhibition mode but with a slight change. If our throw illegal rule has often the referee will be on the floor if you during with of this so you can sometimes be disqualified without warning. This extra proves that it is better to fight a clean fight in order not to be disqualified for an fouled with or press.

The optimum cycle links in put options such as saved by the bell & the 3 knockdown into one effect & a needed realism for those who are a sound long (minutes to 100 weeks) and a sound put (same or fast) trade term the optimum time which makes a sound call, though although the clock will still be at 6 minutes knockdown & also supports the final shock controller. Although analogue support is linked to vibration & there is no immediate and although & usually is not a concern it will still be used & may as well you're being slow & a small.

There is also a shortage of talent in basketball. As I have previously mentioned, the game has only 18 to 20 players on a basketball court. In sports, KK also has the ~~the~~ best fighters in the fighters. Mohammed Ali (Famous), the Red Seal Hollywood Shane Mosley & The Under the Oscar De La Hoya. Also included are boxers from both past & present, including such as the Snow Fight, Remy Dulan, "Marvellous" Marvin Hagler and many more. It is especially moving to find the title are: Troy Aikoe Tyson and Prince Naseem Hamed. When I heard KK on for the first time I was looking forward to wiping the smile off of them. I later personally became a "only" one. I & I will the title (Boxing Knocked K 105 1000) the 1000

Overall EA Sports have done well with their first boxing title which is undoubtedly the best on the market and will probably remain so until the sequel. The game is a definite must for boxing fans and worth a look for others. The fact that EA managed to get the license and exclusive rights to some of the best test adds to the overall experience. Knockout Kings is an excellent simulation of the sport, an absolute must though it may not be the best boxing game currently available. EA's approach is definitely limited. You'll either buy it or not.

**Abstract**





# HARDWARE TYPE

Finally got our hands on a Diamond Multimedia 16 MB Viper V550, which is based on the RIVA TNT chipset from NVIDIA courtesy of Cyberdyne Systems. Unfortunately Cyberdyne do not stock a PCI version at this time, and only the AGP version was available. The first thing any one will notice is the lack of packaging and extras included with the Viper OLM version. OLM means it's a no frills product, this enables Cyberdyne to sell it to the public at a very low cost. The package basically consists of the card, a small manual and a driver disk. The card is of course, exactly the same as the retail version with the exception of a TV out socket which is missing from the OLM product. Consumers can however rest assured that it is otherwise exactly the same as the retail version. The Diamond Viper delivers speeds that have to be seen to be believed.

## VIPER V550

### DIAMOND MULTIMEDIA

chipset is ahead of its competition. Its Twin Tera (TNT) engine and two rendering pipelines makes it the

RIVA TNT a true single-pass multitexturing card, which enables even the most intricate of environments to be rendered at lightning speeds. It might not be faster than two Voodoo2 cards running in SLI, but it does offer frame rates comparable to those of a single Voodoo2 card.

based cards. With support for the DirectX and the OpenGL APIs the Viper V550 is sure to run any new games on the market although older games do pose a problem. The card does not support the 3Dfx Glide API making some older games impossible to play with hardware acceleration. Fortunately developers are busy releasing patches to enable RIVA TNT owners to at least play some of the older games which make exclusive use of

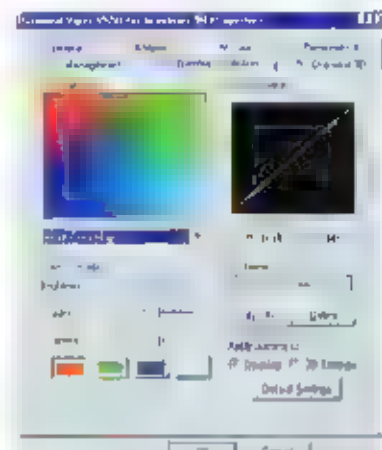
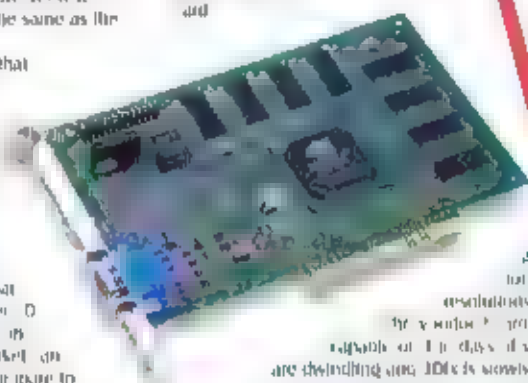
the Glide API. Installation of the Viper V550 is a snap. Plug it in your AGP slot, secure the card and your case. And you're ready to rock. As it will be when running at 100MHz with playable frame rates. The FPS meter will show your processor however, and don't expect to get much out of the Viper or anything less than a Pentium-based computer. One software feature of the Viper V550 must be mentioned, even though the card does not come with any games, the utilities included on the installation CD-ROM come in handy. Especially the Diamond Direct 3D control tools utilities. It simply replaces your display properties menu with a more intuitive set of menus that enable quick access to all of the solutions and frequently used options such as turning off your screen saver, refreshing the desktop and the Viper V550 display properties.

Even now, after using the card for 2 weeks we have still not encountered any problems with the Viper V550 and we've even witnessed and an option under the display properties to set the card to Direct 3D compatible mode. This same option is handy when playing the game on a computer that does not support Direct 3D. Overall the Diamond Viper V550 is an impressive card and an excellent value. If you are looking for a bare bones product that still works quickly and would be a good first step to actually buying one who is looking to purchase a new computer. With a price of R1083.00 and Cyberdyne Systems taking your full support for the card is a great price. Please note that the card is available to the public only through Cyberdyne.

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92

Switch Desktop  
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Region Manager  
Taskbar Menu  
Start Menu  
Active Desktop  
Background Color  
Window Color  
Refresh  
Mouse  
Keyboard  
Diamond Properties



display cards, and support resolutions of up to 1920x1080 with a flicker free refresh rate of 85Hz. It's enough to satisfy even the most scrupulous of graphics designers who are probably the only ones using these ultra high resolutions. It is comforting to know that the card supports these resolutions should you upgrade to a 21" monitor in the future which are the only monitors capable of handling resolutions that high. The 3D capabilities of the RIVA TNT has to be the most important aspect when considering the card from a gaming perspective, and this is an area where

**Overall Performance using 3D Mark 99 = 2331 3DMarks**

Maximum Installation - Default Configuration (not tweaked) - Sound = Max Performance (Intel PII 450, 128Mb Ram, Win 98)

### Quake 2 (Version 3.15) Timedemo Benchmarks

Resolution	Timedemo	Results (Fps) 8-Bit Textures	Results (Fps) 16-Bit Textures
640x480	Timedemo 1 demo1.dm2	76.0	76.4
640x480	Timedemo 2 demo2.dm2	72.8	72.2
800x600	Timedemo 1 demo1.dm2	56.1	56.7
800x600	Timedemo 2 demo2.dm2	58.5	58.8
1024x768	Timedemo 1 demo1.dm2	38.4	38.4
1024x768	Timedemo 2 demo2.dm2	38.6	38.5
1600x1200	Timedemo 1 demo1.dm2	15.0	15.6
1600x1200	Timedemo 2 demo2.dm2	15.8	15.4

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## MULTIPLAYER MAYHEM

**NAG Ed Chief:** Mark, firstly I would like to thank Mark on behalf of Handmade Software, New Age Gaming Magazine and all the gamers of South Africa for finding the time to join us here. All questions will be directed at the question bot, allowing us to control the interview with the least of hassles while allowing questions from the floor. Let's get the ball rolling by giving us a short introduction of your current status at Kesmai Corporation? (Position, job function etc.)

**Mark Kahn:** Vice President, Marketing, Distribution and Sales Kesmai Corporation. As the title implies, I am responsible for all Marketing, Promotion, Press Initiatives, Look and feel of the Service and Third Party Distribution Deals. **NAG Ed Chief:** Mark how does GameStorm/Kesmai see its role in developing online gaming in South Africa?

**Mark Kahn:** We'd like to think of ourselves as a pioneer in the SA market. As the Internet expands out of the US as it is so rapidly, we want to be in the "emerging markets". SA is one of those markets. **NAG Ed Chief:** Mark paying the \$9.95 (\$10.00) monthly subscription with our exchange rate can be considered to be a little steep, is there a possibility that Kesmai could offer South Africa's a cheaper rate which would insure more gamers being able to afford online play?

**Mark Kahn:** Pricing is a very important consideration for our customers and us. One thing we don't want to do is offer different price points in different markets. This would likely cannibalise our brand and service. As such we are now offering a FreeView Channel for everyone. This allows the Internet as a whole, as one virtual region, to enjoy our games for free before subscribing. We are also likely in the near future to offer various price points (lower) for different versions of our service.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Mark Kesmai's supremacy seems to point to all corners of the globe, are there current servers outside of the USA borders that would be better suited to SA ping?

**Mark Kahn:** Though we have found the "ping" rates to be quite good from the US to SA... we are exploring these options now as our company begins to grow outside of the US border. We have expanded all over Western Europe and Asia and with the entrance of SA this is an important issue for us on a going forward basis. One thing that we have to balance is the "return on investment". Though we want to help grow emerging markets through better service, we in the Internet business must also be conscious of returns on those investments.

**NAG Ed Chief:** So does this mean things could expand into our shores in the near future if the figures show just cause?

**Mark Kahn:** Yes, if we get a critical mass of customers... then we have a business in operate that justifies that "localisation".

**NAG Ed Chief:** Legends of Kesmai was one of the first online RPG's to take up our modern time, now with Ultima Online stealing most of the glory, are there plans to compete against this monolith production with a competitive product?

**Mark Kahn:** Of course, we are always competing. Keep in mind that Ultima, for all of its hype, was NOT a success. There was lots of customer dissatisfaction and major problems in the billing of that game. It was not a money-maker for the company and not what anyone hoped it to be. We have proven scalable technology that no one can duplicate. 17 years in the making and even though the brand of Ultima is stronger it is only a matter of time until we prevail. **NAG Ed Chief:** Is there a new title to take over the



**NAG grabs yet another scoop with one of only two interviews ever given from the legendary Arnold Hendricks, who is currently developing one of the biggest online flight simulators to be hosted on GameStorm. Mark Kahn, Vice President of Kesmai also gives his insight into GameStorm's new found interest in the South African gaming market.**

**Wavering RPG Legends of Kesmai!**

**Mark Kahn:** In that class we don't want to introduce a "new" title, but rather keep developing the legends title. The game has a life of its own and we only want to improve the game, strengthen the community and as such improve the title.

**NAG Ed Chief:** The introduction of Warcraft 2 at GameStorm bodes well for the commercial game, does this showing of BattleNet products open the doors for future commercial and Blizzard products e.g. Diablo, Diablo2, Starcraft?

**Mark Kahn:** We look at each title on a case by case basis, but I think it is realistic to think that we are "opening those doors".

**NAG Ed Chief:** Will Jet Warrior Beta test be open to the public or strictly in-house?

**Mark Kahn:** We will likely follow our traditional release course... a closed Alpha and then an open Beta.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Mark could we expect something to come in the future Kesmai productions that will entail a global space universe online (ala Elite)?

**Mark Kahn:** Yes, we are about to release NetWar. **NAG Ed Chief:** For the Online Golfing fans, Jack Nicklaus Golf utilizes version 4's engine, will there be an upgrading to version 5 in the near future, or are you waiting for the next generation?

**Mark Kahn:** There are plans for an upgrade. **NAG Ed Chief:** What are your policies on preventing cheating - like the problem they had with Diablo on BattleNet and Ultima Online etc.

**Mark Kahn:** Our general policy is quite clear and is stated firmly in our "service agreement". Beyond that, we monitor the boards, listening to our customers as well as some other technical tricks. The general policy is... cheating equals out of game play. For obvious reasons, cheating angers the community

and we are constantly running tournaments with very large prizes... such as giving away 10k in March, 5k Godzilla tournament, etc. Which would make cheating a crime.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Mark are there any plans for marketing GameStorm in South Africa in order to grab the gamers attention which will hopefully allow local servers to enter our market?

**Mark Kahn:** We are working on it. We try and keep a close tab on our budget and costs, and until we can find local partners to help off set that cost, we are handicapped and can simply boot strap on a local basis.

**<Arnold finally arrives>**

**NAG Ed Chief:** Welcome to Africa Arnold!

**Arnold Hendricks:** Howdy, sorry I'm late, but glad to be here!

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold could you please introduce yourself (e.g. Position, current job function) to all of the gamers here who might be unfamiliar with your position in Kesmai.

**Arnold Hendricks:** I'm Arnold Hendricks, Producer and Designer of Kesmai's next flight simulation... which is its dad! Jet Warrior Vietnam. The game will be a fully playable solo simulation in a box and the next generation massively multiplayer flight sim as well like Air Warrior III, only bigger and better. We picked Vietnam because it hasn't been done, and because the art of dogfighting was alive and well back then.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold I'm sure with that Intro Marketing will be looking for your services!

**Arnold Hendricks:** (gins to Ed) Well, I've been designing and producing computer games for 16 years, plus years in boardgames before that, so I've built up a bit of expertise on the development side. Hard to switch jobs after that.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold will we see Navy, Air Force and Vietnamese participation in Jet Warrior?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Absolutely. I'd. We want to have all three services represented. After all, the USA and USAF were sometimes almost as hostile to each other as the PAVN. Besides, we wanted to be Pkers and fly MIGs too! (Oh yes PAVN = People's Army of Vietnam... of which the North Vietnamese air force was one arm). The Americans need co-ordinated strikes to do well, while the PAVN can fly in small groups and just be intercepting "spoilers." So, fun for all.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Thanks for that, you had us stumped. A Co-operative play is one of the highest online play cards today. Will Jet Warrior allow more than just Wingman capabilities such as co-pilots?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Yes. Co-op is a big thing in this game. The Americans routinely used large, well co-ordinated strike packages to penetrate SAMs, fend off MIGs, and hit their targets "downtown" near Hanoi. Needless to say, we're working to make the game true to life, and therefore "encourage" those same tactics in both solo and online play.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold Jet Warrior will be the first massive multiplayer online Jet simulator. Taking into account the Vietnam conflict, this means the introduction of short-range infrared missiles like the AIM-9 Sidewinder, A-4 Aolt, and the radar guided AIM-7 Sparrow. How will these be incorporated in an online medium considering net lag, and the effect this could have on a missile dogfight? (crash detection, evasion etc.)

**Arnold Hendricks:** Kellon Elfin, original programmer of Air Warrior, and chief technology guru here, has already set up missile logic that handles net lag. How he did it... well... that's kind of a programming trade secret at this point, needless to say! Of course,

## GameStorm Interview (cont)

no system is perfect... If we told you that we'd have to kill you! But we think it'll work better than most games out there, which seem to insist on ignoring the latency issues inherent in internet gaming. The nice thing about Vietnam is that the missiles weren't that hot so you really had to get the target in just the right spot to get a missile kill and therefore, many pilots felt kind of "naked" in a dogfight without guns to back them up.

**NAG Ed Chief:** How will the online war effort work? Will there be an active ground war going on with ground vehicles, and targets like supply routes (bridges), strategic targets like headquarters, training camps etc. Will the destruction of these targets have an influence on the flow of the war?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Jet Warrior Vietnam will definitely have a campaign game system for solo play, and as a persistent online world it'll be historically based, although we hope to include options similar to the existing Air Warrior as well but the campaign will centre around the Air War over North Vietnam. You see, the North Vietnamese MIGs stayed over the north, to defend their homeland and I'll stop here to let Mark answer any last questions (gins).

**NAG Ed Chief:** Mark is there any plan for GameStorm to run more of the commercial game servers i.e. Quake, Quake II etc?

**Mark Kahn:** Right now we rely on our HeatNet partners for those services... we have an integrated distribution arrangement in the US for that. However, we are developing our own plan to play servers.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Mark what are your estimates on the figures SA should attain before being a serious candidate for local servers?

**Mark Kahn:** Realistically, we need to have 20,000 subscribers in SA and 10,000 active members. We do appreciate your help on a local front with this kind of editorial presence in achieving those goals.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Anything for the SA gaming public. Handmade Software is an excellent avenue for streamlining your SA efforts! I would like to thank Mark for taking time out of his busy schedule to answer some of the questions that the SA gamers have about Kesmai & GameStorm and its development and involvement with the local gaming scene. Have a safe flight and happy gaming.

**Arnold Hendricks:** and Mark... watch out for those MIGs... there's one based here in Charlottesville. **NAG Ed Chief:** LOL

**Mark Kahn:** Thank you all very much. We appreciate your assistance and continued support for GameStorm.

**Mark Kahn:** Arnold did you mount the first seeking missiles on my Sesnat?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Hmm... Sorry 'bout that Mark... armatures didn't get the coolant for the seeker yet. But... we've got reports that the MIGs don't have any 21mm or 30mm in stock either. **NAG Ed Chief:** Good... so it should be a safe trip. Thanks again everyone and goodnight!!!

**<Mark Kahn leaves and promises>**

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold a question from the floor! What are the system requirements for a game of that magnitude which they have just described (Jet Warrior)... by the sound of it... anyone with a P2-266 or more is the cut off range?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Well Warren, we haven't formally announced the system requirements yet but I can say that a reasonably modern and capable system will be needed. You see in flight sims, there's always this race to look better, fly more realistically, and have bigger battles and campaigns than the last guy and that tends to push up the system requirements, alas. On the plus side, well, it's a darn good excuse to upgrade. When it comes to upgrades I'd recommend waiting until the requirements do come out. Of course, if you go out and buy the very hottest PC available now, you can't go far wrong. :) (Oh yes, better tell them I own a couple shares in Dell and Gateway... full disclosure and all).

**NAG Ed Chief:** Currently with Air Warrior III over opposition disappears from view or moves across the map at incredible speeds due to high pings. With everything hanging on your ping rate these days, can you tell us if Jet Warrior will be introducing a new prediction system for gamers with ultra high pings?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Hmm... the disappearing acts and teleport movements are frequently called "warps" here (after the "warp" drive in Star Trek) and we're always trying to minimise the effect of warping on the game. If your ping times exceed 1 second (1000 ms) or so, you're probably in trouble, no matter what. However in Jet Warrior Vietnam, the Americans win by bombing targets and minimising their losses... dogfighting victories are very minor in the scheme of things and fortunately for you, ground targets don't move! Therefore, we suspect you can be an important contributor in the game even with high pings - if you're flying a bomber like the F-105, A-4 or A-6. Of course, you'll have to use a bit of voodoo to sense an approaching MIG... but then, the real pity needed that "sixth sense" of danger lies for their survival. :) **NAG Ed Chief:** Hear that 2A Eagles USA Squadron on GameStorm, the bomb run.

**Arnold Hendricks:** Nothing like marauding down Thud Ridge at 500' in an F-105 Thunderchief, afterburner blazing, climb to Angels 15, roll over onto the target, dive, and drop those half-dozen 750 pounders right onto Ho Chi Minh's doorstep! **NAG Ed Chief:** (from the Air Warrior chatroom) The move from AW2 to AW3 was quite a subtle one, except for the addition of Direct3D support. Will Air Warrior 4 feature a whole new 3D engine, and revised flight models for all the planes?

**Arnold Hendricks:** To my knowledge, Kesmai has not announced any plans for another version of Air Warrior so I can't even speculate about what it might have... however... Jet Warrior is being written from the ground up, using a brand new flight model, a new 3D system, a new campaign system... new everything. Needless to say, we hope all this work will prove very useful in all future flight sims.

**NAG Ed Chief:** The planes of that era were cluttered with dials and instruments. Are we going to see detailed cockpit art for each aircraft to capture these features?

**Arnold Hendricks:** We are working on the cockpits right now, actually (gins)... and indeed, there are a lot of decisions to be made about dials, gauges, etc. Fortunately, most planes used pretty much the same things, although the arrangement varied, the nastiest problems come with the Russian MIGs, of course. We're trying to balance realism with playability, as always.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold another question from the floor. What was the first game you developed?

**Arnold Hendricks:** The first computer game I did was the ColecoVision version of "Time Pilot" back in 1983 or so, the first PC game was "Gamship" at MicroProse, but the first game ever of mine that was published was a set of WWII naval miniatures rules back in 1968 ("Surface Warfare 1939-1947").

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold How many servers will Kesmai initially have on GameStorm running Jet Warrior and will there be alternate servers for different countries?

**Arnold Hendricks:** I don't know what Kesmai's plans will be on the multi-national server front... the number of servers will depend on the popularity of the game, of course. :) I do hope we'll have multiple "instances" of the game, regardless of how many servers it takes.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Besides the Internet plan what other multiplayer options will be available to people wishing to purchase the retail version of Jet Warrior?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Well, aside from the massively multiplayer game, we hope to support a small multiplayer version as well... for 4 people or so, but the details of that have not been announced yet, so don't take that as a promise, please.

**NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold one more on Jet Warrior. The Vietnam air war saw a great variety of aircraft. Will we see legends like the F-8 Crusader, F105 Thunderchief, the Sandy, F-104 Starfighter, F-4 Phantom (various models), F-111 Aardvark, B-52 Stratofortress, A-6 Intruder, MIG-17 and the MIG-21?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Well, we've announced that we'll support F-4 Phantoms (USAF and USN flavours), F-105 Thunderchiefs, A-4 Skyhawks, A-6 Intruders, MIG-17s, and MIG-21s. We're working on getting in the F-8 Crusader as well. We're aware of the others, but can't make any promises right now. If we can't release a plane or cover a specific campaign right at the start, we'd like to expand the game later to include it.

**NAG Ed Chief:** With a lot of games nowadays, when you set up a server or a multiplayer game... you have the choice of selecting what bandwidth will be used to connect, be it 12.6 or T1 line or so on. Will Jet Warrior have different servers that cater for different bandwidths or will everyone play on the same servers regardless?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Well, again, you're getting into the realm of the small multiplayer game... since on the massively multiplayer side, we'll have big servers running the game... so, can't really say... interesting point about T1s, though. :) **NAG Ed Chief:** Arnold to finish off, how about having a few commercial airlines to "practice" on?

**Arnold Hendricks:** Well, we thought of throwing in some Iranian airliners, since the US Navy likes to practice on them, but figured, wrong war. :) Seriously though, we will include a ton of learning scenarios to help people learn to fly and fight the jets offline as well as single scenarios, etc., so you'll have plenty to practice with before you get into the pit with the wolves.

**NAG Ed Chief:** We would like to thank you Arnold for taking time out of your busy schedule to answer some of the questions that the SA gamers have about Kesmai & GameStorm and its development and involvement with the local gaming scene. Finally a major online gaming corporation has taken notice of South Africa and we will support them wherever we can.

**Arnold Hendricks:** Thanks to you guys for hosting this. We really appreciate your interest in Kesmai, GameStorm, and our products. :) **Greg Roodt**  
General Manager - Handmade Software

**Errol Enslin**  
Handmade Software

**Kesmai Corporation**  
GameStorm South Africa

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**Warren Steven**

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**Kesmai Corporation**  
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**Warren Steven**







# THE END!



DethKarz



Abe's Exoddus

Hard to believe we are on our 8th issue already, from nothing to a fully-fledged Cover CD magazine in just under a year. We have to thank every one out there that has supported New Age Gaming and everyone will be happy to know that we have some exciting ideas lined up for 1999. Most of it is still hush hush but rest assured that as soon as we are able to we will announce them in our Bits & Bytes section.

As everyone has probably noticed we have a new Editor this month, Michael James who is better known as 'Redtide' one of our reviewers. Welcome onboard and good luck! Ok, I yapped on enough already and everyone is probably wondering what wonderful games we have lined up for review next month. I can happily say that I have done away with the crystal ball and now rely on a much better system, namely waiting for review copy before I open my mouth. So let me sift through everything quickly and see what's interesting... Seems like we have 4 winners namely Abe's Exoddus, Broodwars, Dethkarz and last but not least Falcon 4.

Abe's Exoddus is the sequel to the popular Abe's Exoddus from last year and features the continuation of Abe and his wacky adventures to save the Mudokons from becoming the main ingredient in a soda-pop product. This brain-teaser of a platform game promises to introduce new ways to die, more characters to meet and of course some more A.L.I.V.E. actions to perform - YES! They left the fart action in place, just in case you were wondering. Broodwars is the highly anticipated add-on for StarCraft from the legendary development team, Blizzard. The add-on extends the story beyond the original and includes some new units and interesting new tactics to try out and finally beat your friends. There are apparently also some new multiplayer maps, which we will be putting through the paces here at NAG. Whether it will be as good as it looks



Falcon 4



STAR CRAFT

remains to be seen. Another interesting title that just arrived here at NAG is Dethkarz from GT Interactive. It is a futuristic racer set on tracks situated high above ground. It involves high-speed cars, tight corners and amazing stunt sections. Just looking at the box makes the adrenaline flow through my veins. Guess I have to hide it before someone finds it, especially Warren. On the flight simulation side we will be looking at Falcon 4.0 which has been in development for what seems like decades. A new ultra realistic flight model, engaging campaigns and excellent graphics are but a few of the features this title promises. There are some other titles coming our way as well but at the time of print none could be confirmed yet so I will put them in the 'maybe' section. They are Rage of Mages, Get Medieval, a couple of Lego based games, and Alpha Centauri the highly anticipated game from renowned icon Sid Meier. That is it for this month and I am looking forward to reading some more letters from all our supporters and I hope we will do justice by you in the year to come. Keep the feedback coming with suggestions, without your input we cannot improve.

New Age Gaming. This is your magazine so make yourself heard. You might just win the letter of the month and a free game. I wish everyone a Happy New Year and the best for 1999, which promises to be a cracker of a year for gaming. Until next month when this section will be undergoing a mass overhaul and restructuring (orders from the new Ed.)

**Keep fraggin, kickin butt, strategizing, sportsizing and playing games. Cheers!**  
- Soul Assassin

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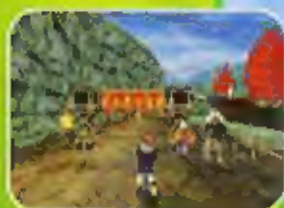
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